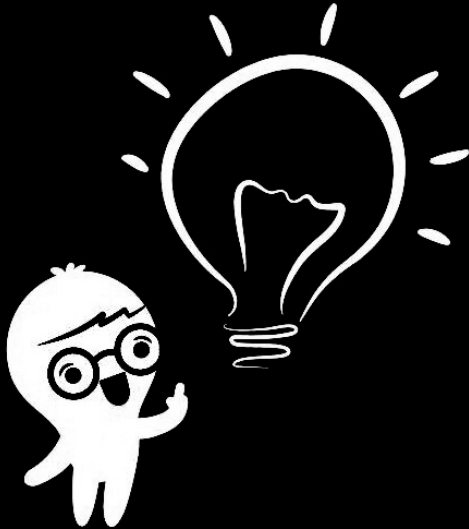


# The Myth of the big idea



**Why painpoints  
matter more**

©Anja Denz 2025

# Mind the gap

Anja Denz

SENIOR SERVICE DESIGNERIN &

SENIOR USER EXPERIENCE ARCHITEKTIN

#joyofuse #betterservices

#Bücher&Podcasts #Schwimmen # Wandern #1Sohn

”

# What is a Service?

**«A service is something  
that helps someone  
to do something.»**

**Lou Downe**

Author, Speaker,

Founder and Director at The School of Good Services

**This is very different to  
the way our clients see  
services.**

**To a user, a service is  
very simple:**

The thing my user is trying to do:

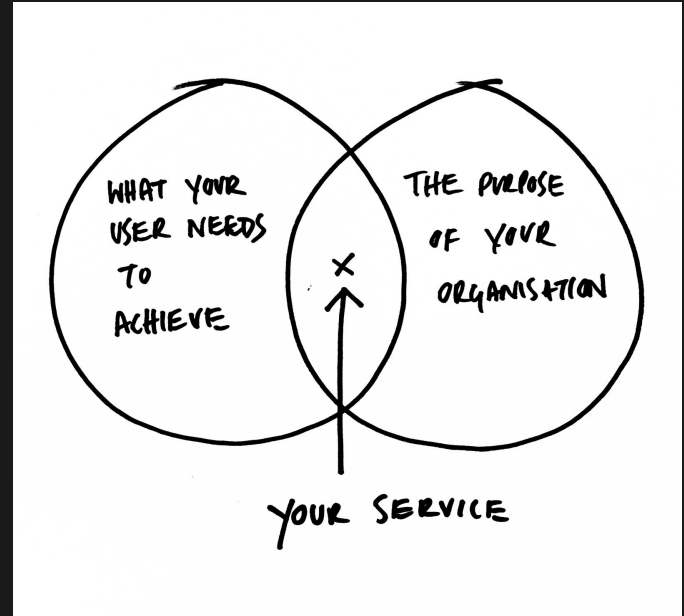
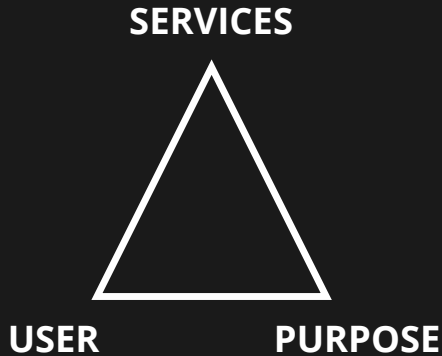
**- needs a drivers licence**



The thing the organisation thinks about providing its service:

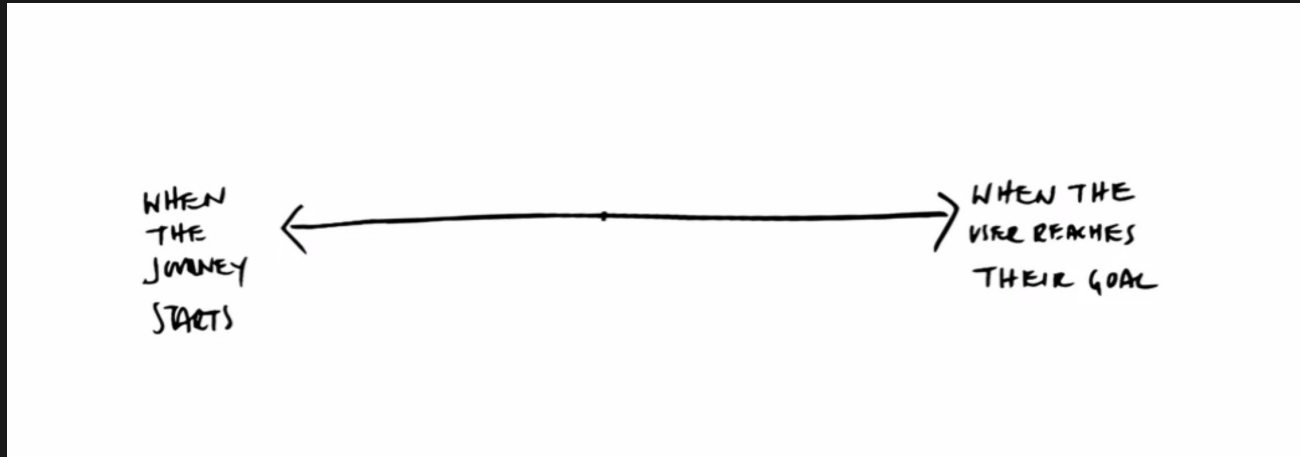
**- Form V11**

# «You can't design a service if you don't know what a service is.»



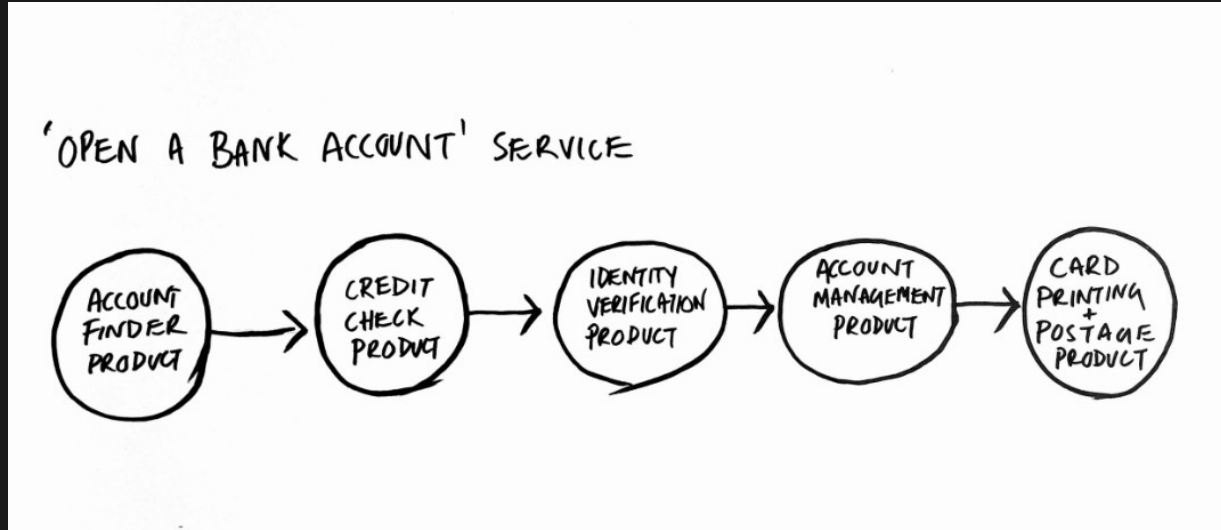
**Just because the organisation  
doesn't deliver the whole  
service, it doesn't mean it is not  
responsible for helping users  
to achieve their goal.**

# Users or Human Beings need a lot of collaboration



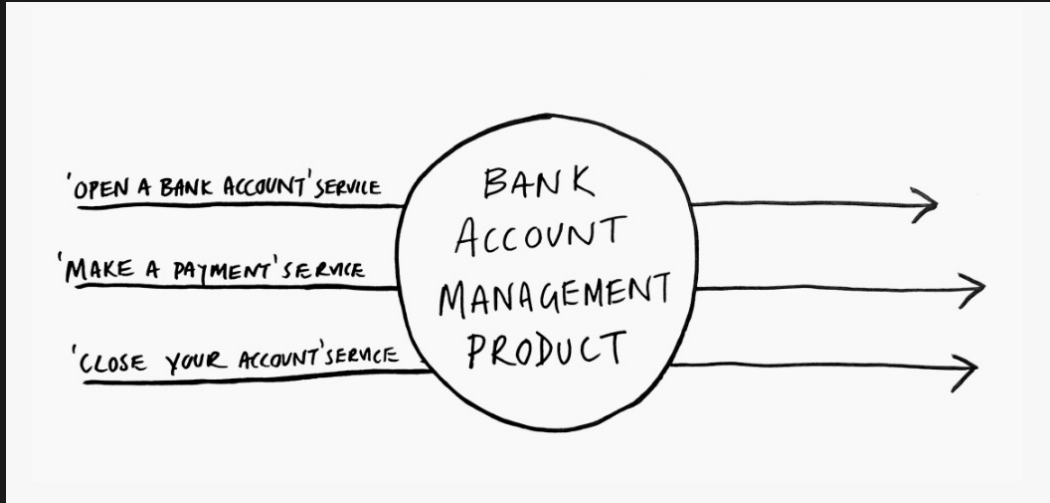
Lou Downe

# The difference between a product and a service



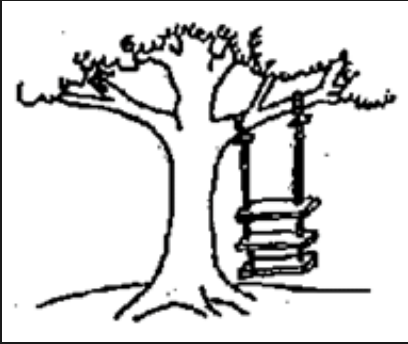
Lou Downe

# The 'account' product in a bank is part of many bank services.



Lou Downe

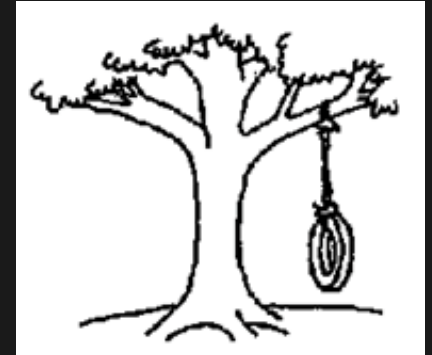
# Think You're Doing Well?



**What company  
thinks they offer**



**What user found**



**What user  
expected**

# The Delivery Gap

**80% vs. 8%**

When we surveyed 362 firms, we found that 80% believed they delivered a “superior experience” to their customers. But customers said that only 8% of companies were really delivering.

**Bain & Company Report**

# 72% perception mismatch

Most growth initiatives **harm** loyal, profitable customers.

It's a challenge of building **strong relationships.**



# Causes: Only...

**50%**

of management teams **tailor their products and services to the needs** of customers

**30%**

organize the functions of their company to **deliver superior customer experiences**

**30%**

maintain effective **customer feedback loops.**

**Bain & Company Report**

# The (wrong) Promise Of Innovation



© Freepik

**«The Job of innovation  
is done.  
Users want  
Quality Experiences.»**

**Yvonne Tran**

Product Design Director at The New York Times  
Service Designer, UX Strategist, Data Designer,  
Stakeholder Manager

©Anja Denz | Service Designer | 2025

**«No innovation until  
everything is fixed!»**

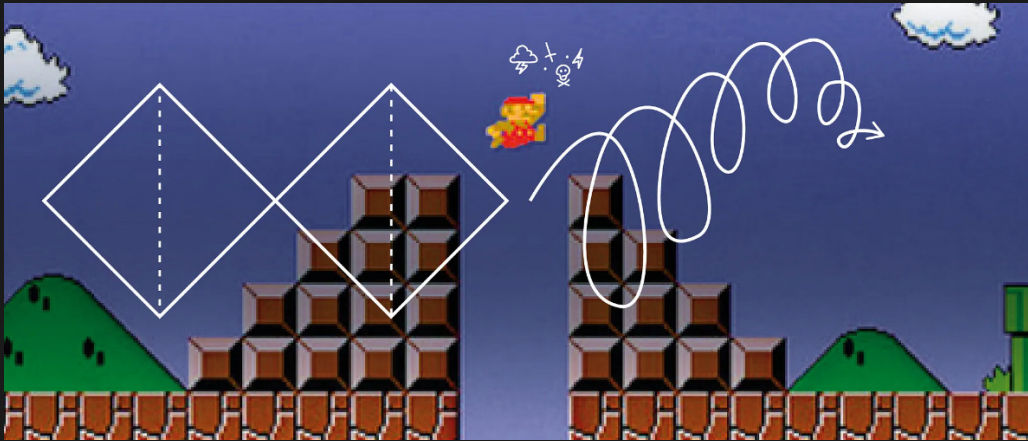
**Lou Downe**

Author, Speaker,

Founder and Director at The School of Good Services

©Anja Denz | Service Designer | 2025

# «Innovation should be redefined and related to PainPoints.»



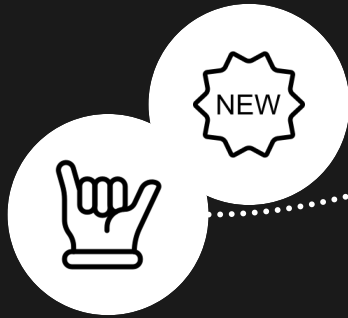
**Service Design  
is a Problem  
Solving Process.**

**Where and why  
is the service  
simply not doing it's job?**

**Just because  
we can build it,  
should we?**

**How do users feel  
and how does it  
affect them?**

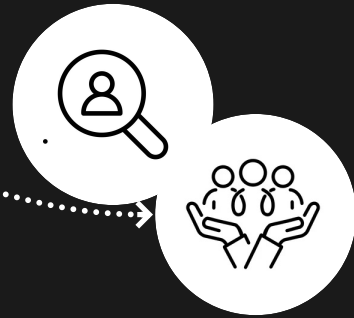
**We don't have to invent  
new recipes – we have to  
ask our users for their  
intolerances.**



cool  
new  
different  
**exclusive**

## INNOVATION

Shift



improved  
accessible  
gives value  
**inclusive**

## PROBLEM CONSCIOUSNESS

# Example



# Change to an extreme customer orientation

Gjensidige is a Norwegian insurance group that offers insurance services in Norway, Denmark, Sweden and the Baltic countries.

**Goal: Reorganization of all services with «extreme customer orientation».**

**4** Years

Ranking

**77 > 11**

# More than 200 face-to-face interviews with customers and employees

> 200

Over 200 interviews with employees and customers revealed daily internal challenges and key customer priorities.

# Getting in touch is a thread

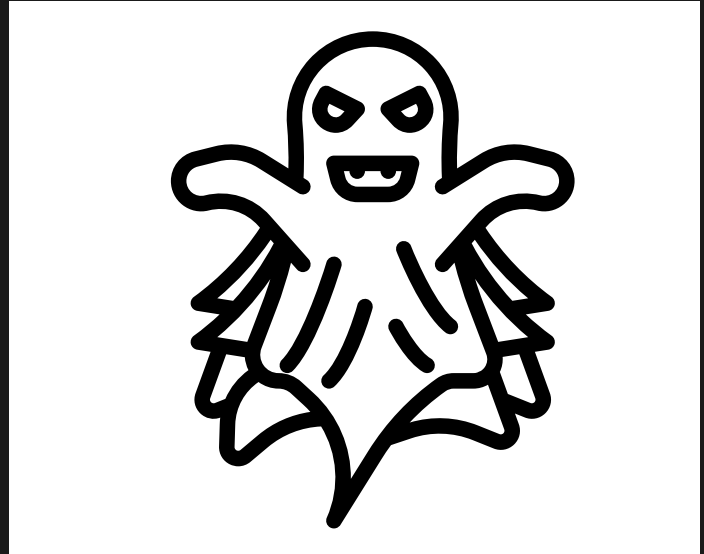
## Result

Most customers dread calling their insurance company to make a claim.

Employees were annoyed about customers not knowing their insurance number.

## Expectation of customers:

- complicated, time-consuming process
- There is something in the small print that destroys the claim



# Wrong Welcome Question

All processes and systems were set up with the initial question:

**«What is your customer number?»**

**AZ 735 124 879 54**

Immediately after a car accident, this was the last thing the injured person was able to answer.

# Restructuring the services with Trust

**New Service Principles – new Strategy:**

**«We trust our customers».**

**Customers are asked: «What happened?»**

Some customers' claims were processed so quickly that they did not realize that their case had been settled and their money had arrived – because they were not once asked for their insurance number.



# Conway's Law

**«Any organization that designs a system will produce a design whose structure is a copy of the organization's communication structure.»**

**Silos > Silos**

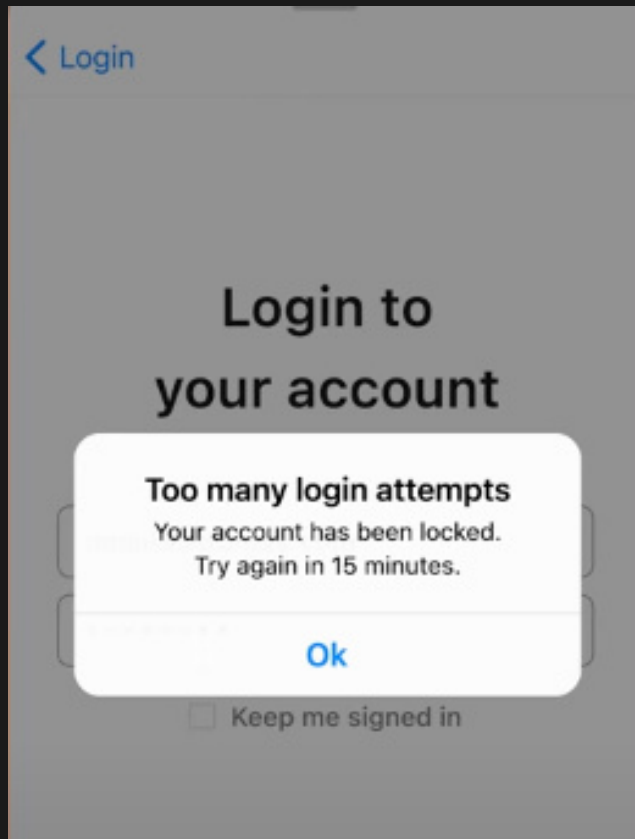
**Mistrust > Forms, Checklists, Uploads, strict Procedure**

# Trust is key



# **Why is trust so important especially in Online Services?**

Because there is  
**no human presence**  
**to assist you** when  
things go wrong.



Because companies do not empathize with users:

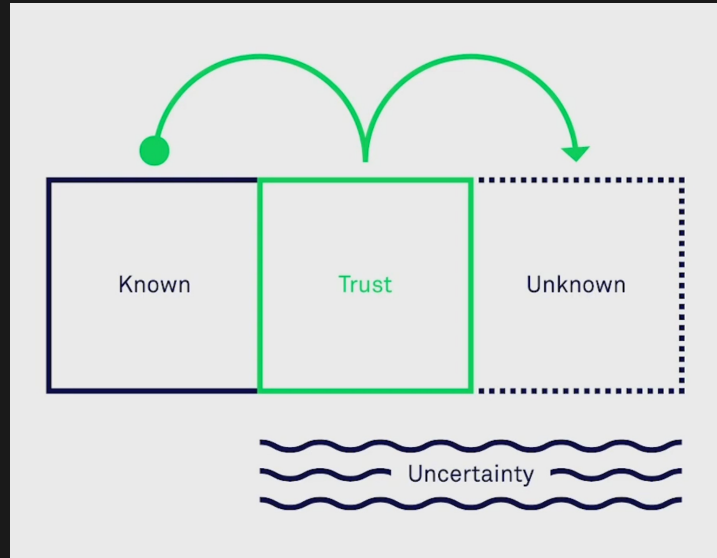
«We've stopped trusting institutions and started trusting strangers.»

3.7 ★★★★★ (148)

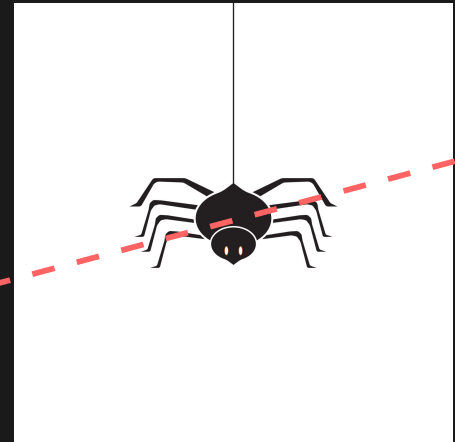
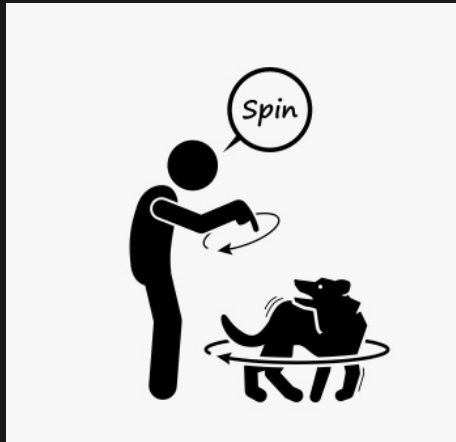
**Rachel Botsman**

Leading Expert on trust in the modern world,  
Author, Dozentin Oxford University, Saïd Business School

# Trust is the bridge between the known and the unknown



# Users like things to be predictable



# Test: Autopilote Tesla Car



Watch This Grandmother Freak Out Behind The Wheel of S...  
YouTube

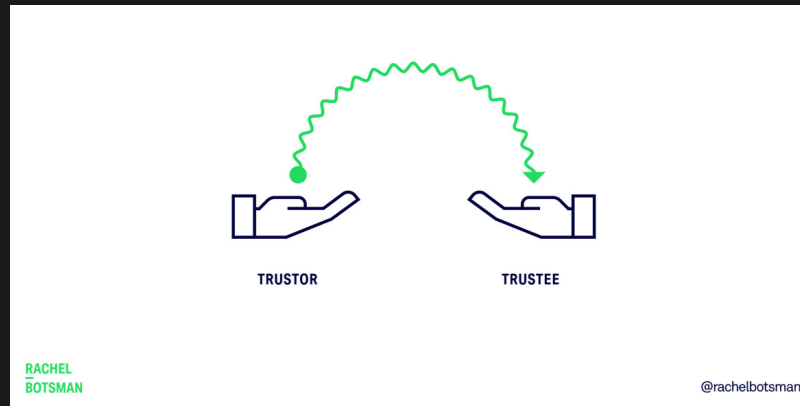


Rachel Botsman

In Online Services,  
**trust is the second most  
important attribute,**  
right after usefulness  
to retain customers.

When we trust companies,  
we freely share our **data, time, and money.**

Trust  $\neq$  Gift  $>$  **continuous effort of a company**



# Trust leads to Interactions which lead to Transactions

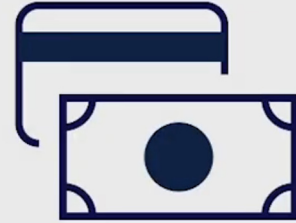
«Vertrauen ist die  
Währung der  
Interaktionen.»

«Geld ist die  
Währung von  
Transaktionen.»

**Rachel  
Botsman**

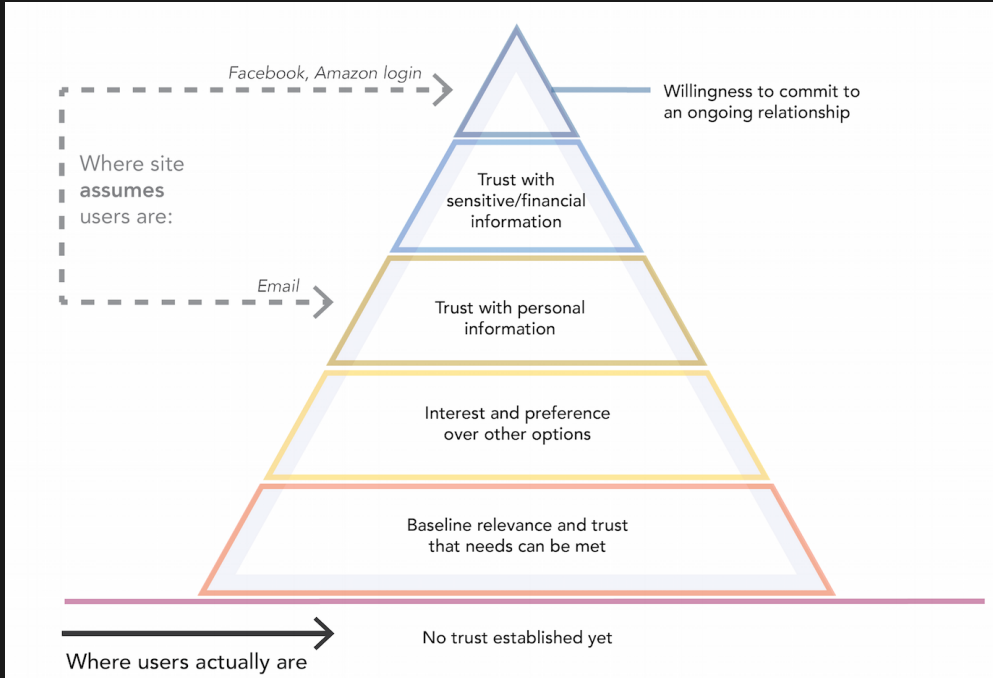


**TRUST IS  
THE CURRENCY OF  
INTERACTIONS**



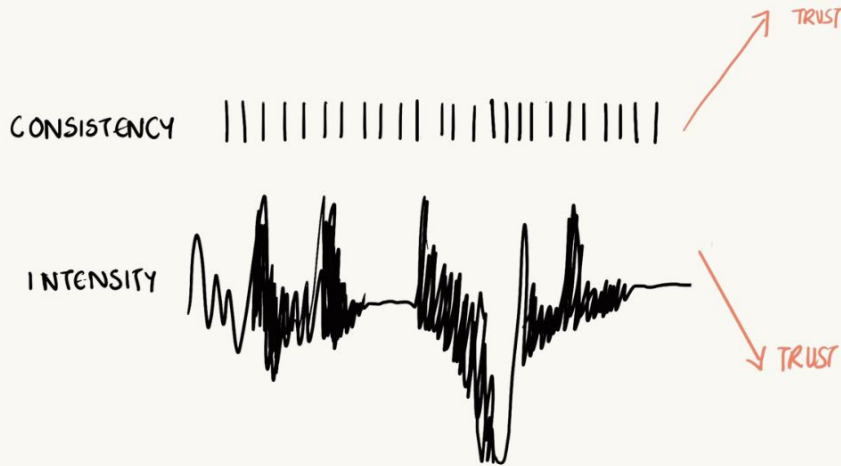
**MONEY IS  
THE CURRENCY OF  
TRANSACTIONS**

# Pyramid of Trust



**Trust builds progressively from basic relevance to sharing personal and financial information.**

# Consistency increases Trust



Consistent touchpoints increase trust more than sporadic grand gestures.

Rachel  
Botsman

# Trust Breach

## 1: Reaktionsfähigkeit – **Responsiveness**

> I stop everything

## 2: Eigenverantwortung – **Ownership**

> not my business anymore

## 3: Empathie – **Empathy**

> I don't care anymore

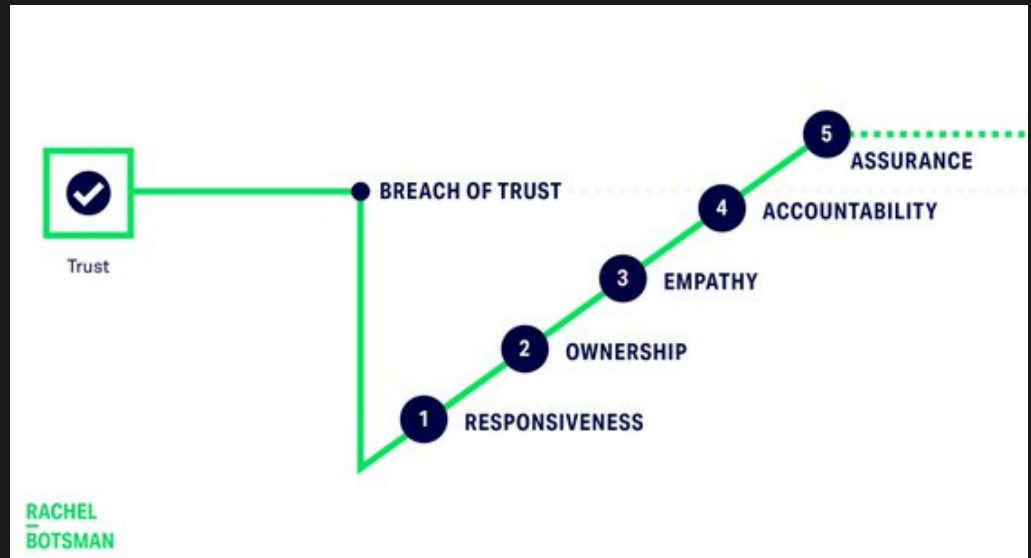
## 4: Zuständigkeiten – **Accountability**

> who's accountable now?

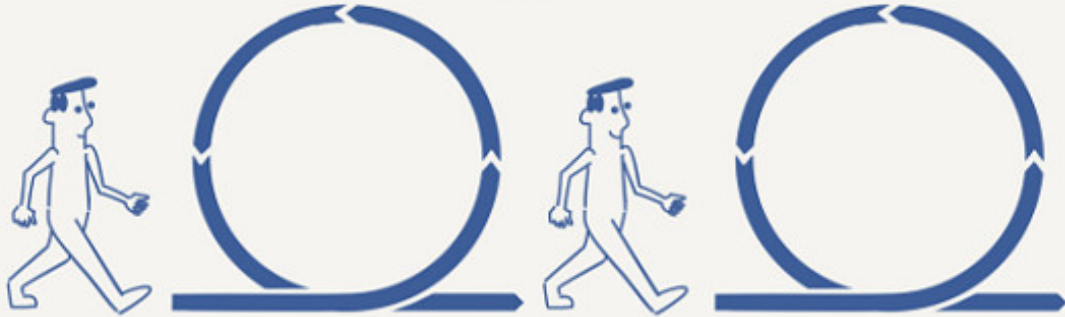
(Me? You?)

## 5: Sicherheit – **Assurance**

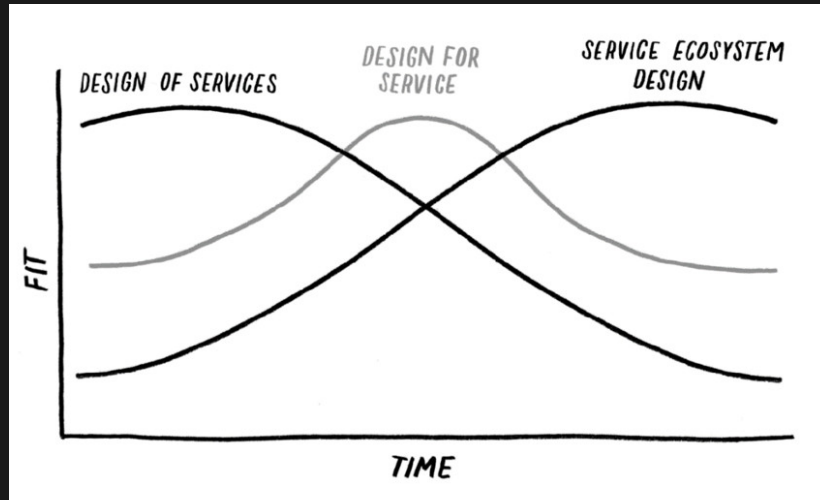
(Okay I'll forgive, I'm in again.)



# Why Service Design is a long walk



# «The value of design is in its process.»



## Study: *The 3 horizons of Service Design*

How service design moves from isolated solutions to holistic, system-oriented approaches.

- 1: Pretty Interfaces
- 2: Designing service for service
- 3: Ecosystem services take into account

**Josina Vink**

Service Design Professor  
Design Institute Oslo

# Services are evolutionary...



Because of:

- Changing customer needs
- Technological progress
- Market dynamics

eg. Google Maps:

From map tool → to navigation service:

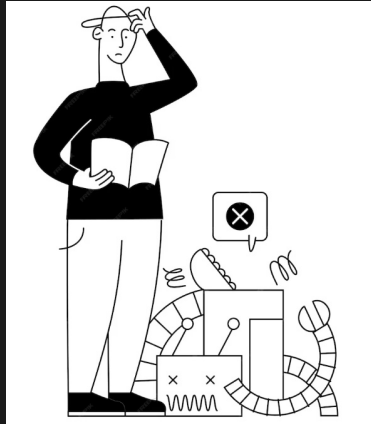
- Real-time traffic information
- Street View
- Satellite images
- etc.

# Services are evolutionary – through constant listening to and observing users



# Users fail!

Users strike to **safety** and **don't want to get harmed**.  
And they **make mistakes** and sometimes **fail**.  
This doesn't matter, if ...



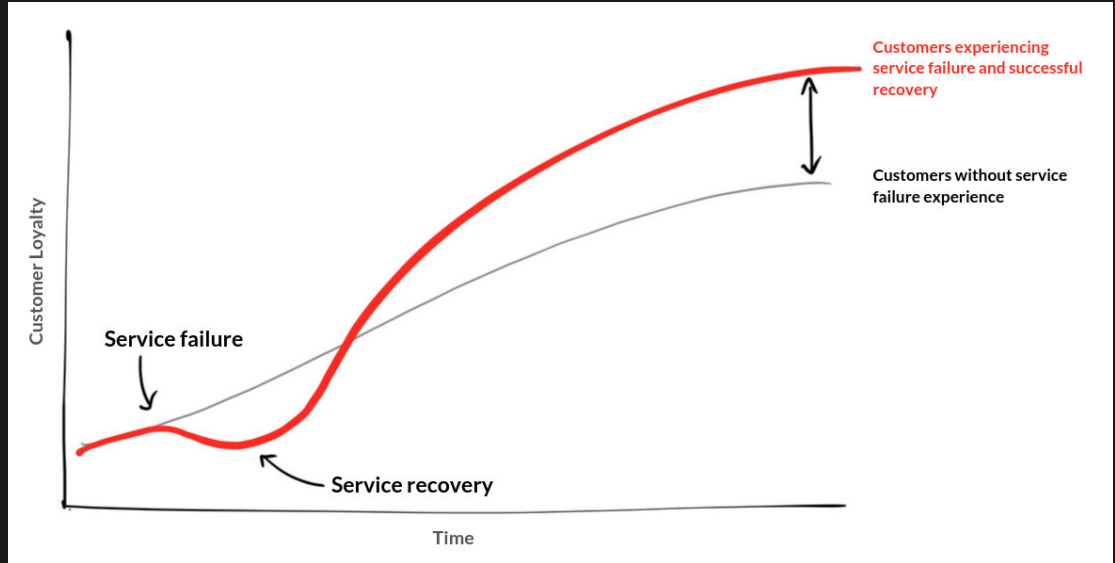
# Service Recovery Paradox

If Users get help to recover from failure their trust increases by

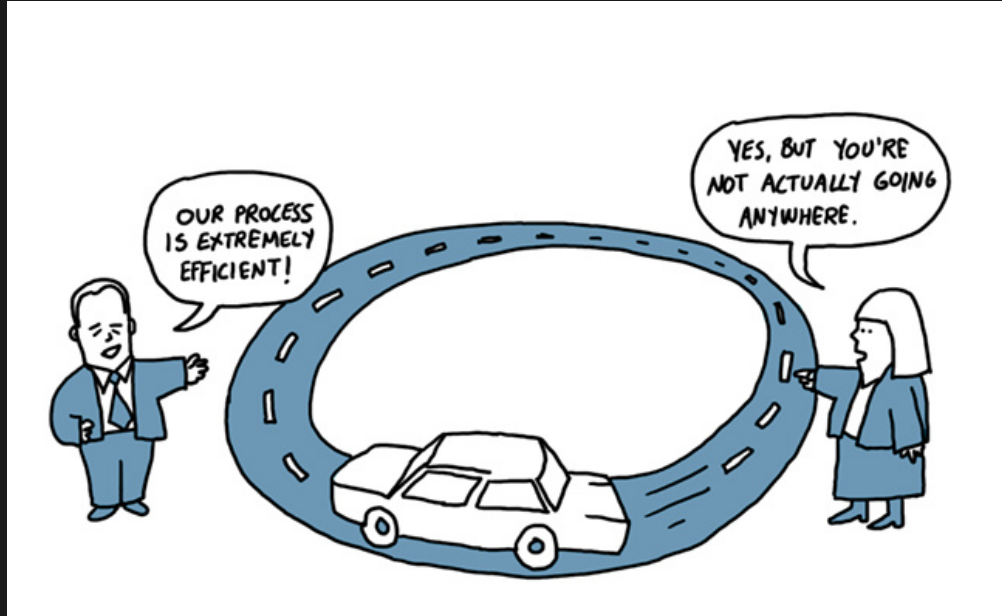
**25%.**

Harvard Business Review study

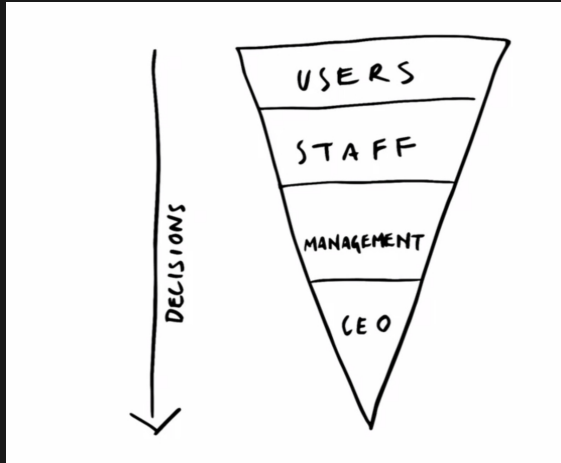
McCollough  
and Bharadwaj



# New Leadership for Leaders



# The new Leadership Balance



**Our job:** Give stakeholders what they want

**Versus:** Give users what they want

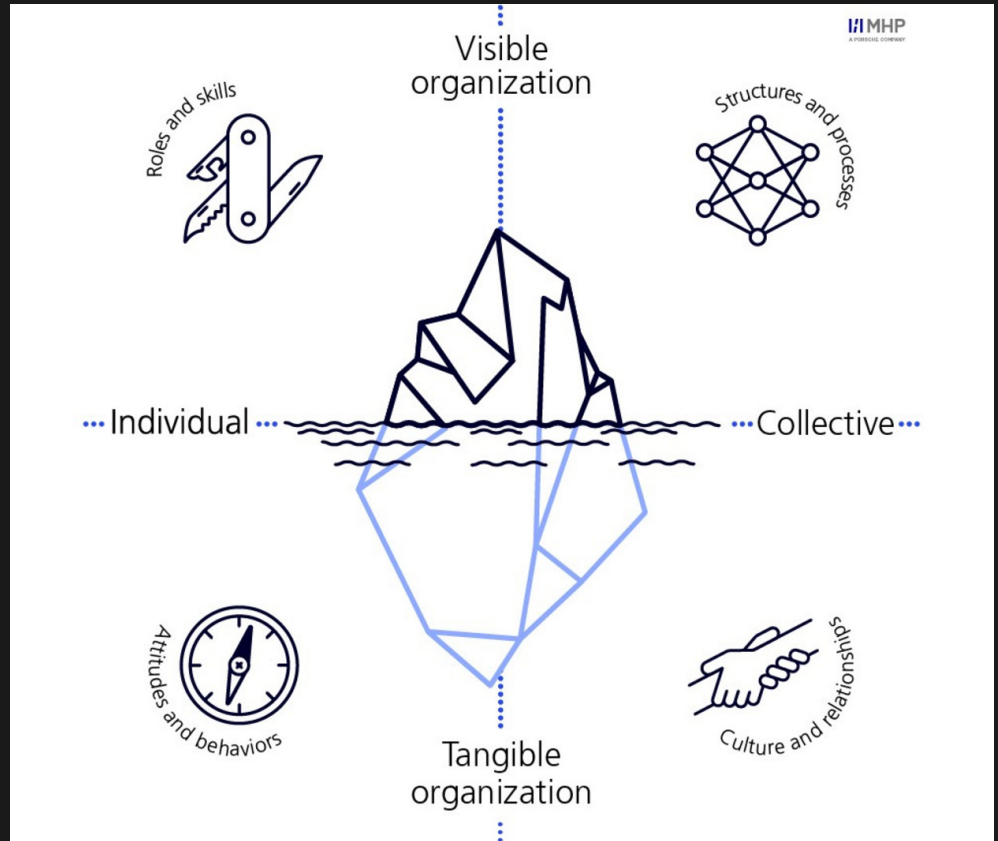
# Create awareness



Lou Downe

# Why is a culture change so hard?

You need a lot of empathy and soft skills to help organizations for a culture change.



# The long way with stakeholders

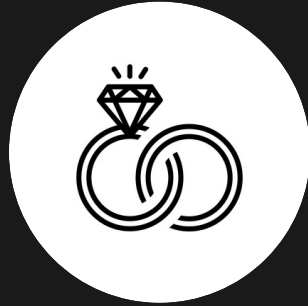
Service Design demands an  
**ongoing stakeholder involvement**  
**and a mindset change in the organisation.**

«You can lead a horse to water– but  
you can't make it drink.» (Saying)

# Building Loyalty with Users/Customers



# Common question:



## How do customers stay loyal to us?

# Reversed question:



**How can we be loyal  
to our customers?**

# Lego Groups Strategy:

«How can we be loyal  
to our customers?»  
Lego Group Strategy

**Aaron Mitchell**

Lego's Global Vice President  
of Membership & Personalisation

# The New Rules of Engagement

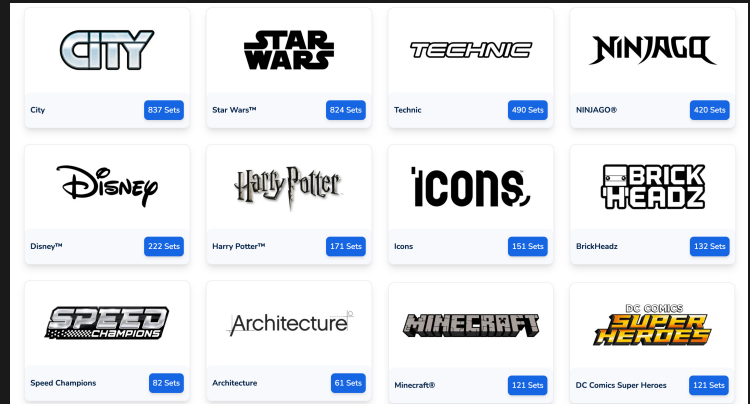
**«We listen to our customers about how they feel about our products. After all, humans decisions are driven by emotions and instincts.»**

LegoGroup

# About being a member

«The feeling of “I belong to something” is very important.»

>>



until now 136 LEGO Themes – and more to come.

Aaron Mitchell

# Transactional experiences changed to emotional experiences.

## Transactional experiences

You expect something and pay for it.

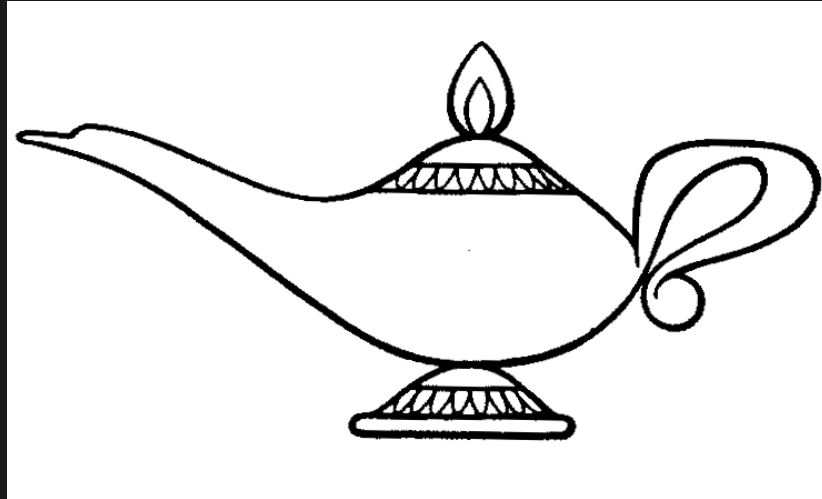


## Emotional experiences

Sometimes exploring freely (e.g., through online content, games, or imagination) and other times making purchases (e.g., products.)



# Future and Best Wishes for Service Design



# Humanized digitalization

**Robots, avatars, chatbots, GPT, etc should become more human and emotional**, especially if they are cost-cutting measures and a 24/7 support.

## **Authentic human support**

AI services like [Replier](#) generate responses to reviews. Previously, fake replies were easy to spot, but with GPT-3, distinguishing them is much harder.

### Here are your replies!

Thanks so much for your kind words! We're so glad you enjoyed our service. We appreciate your feedback.

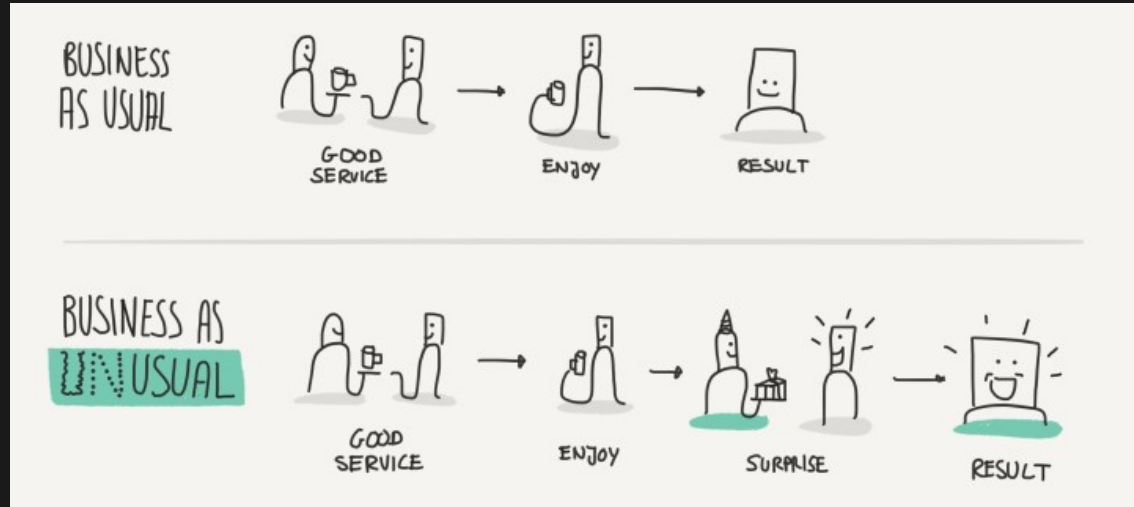
Hello Grace! We are delighted that your experience has been so positive. We hope to see you very soon.

5 stars review! Thank you! 🥰

# Kindness as a Default Setting

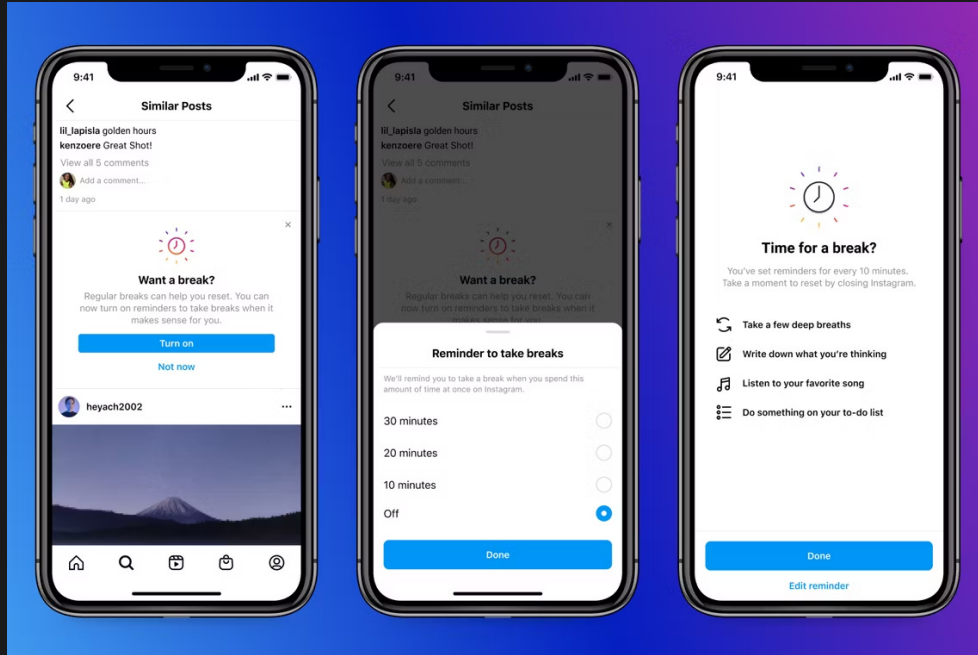
Let's make customer-friendly  
standard options -  
because **95 % of users stick with  
the standard option.**

# Surprise and Delight-Effect



T-Mobile: **Free Tuesdays**  
Amazon: **Free Upgraded Shipping**  
JetBlue: **In-Flight Surprises**

# Make Values – not Dependencies



# Helping – not nudging, luring or tricking users

## 2 Types of Interface Help

### Proactive Help

Aims to familiarize users with an interface

### Reactive Help

Aims to answer questions and troubleshoot problems

Helpfen – nicht subtil verleiten, locken oder austricksen  
Nielsen Norman Group

Lou Downe – in one of her podcasts.

«The inability to find contact information pisses people off.»

Lou Downe

# Benefit:

Cost of acquiring new customers

**5x higher**

than the cost of simply keeping customers.

# Benefit:

# 80%

of users are even prepared to pay more for a good service.

# Meet your enemy – it might be you!

If the Client ist happy -  
we are happy!  
And is the User?



# The Art of Letting Go – Closure Experience

**Many users quit services easily  
like Spotify and Netflix,  
– only to return later,  
because it was so easy.**





**Questions?**