

2006 AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium



“Technological Connections between Customers
and Employees”

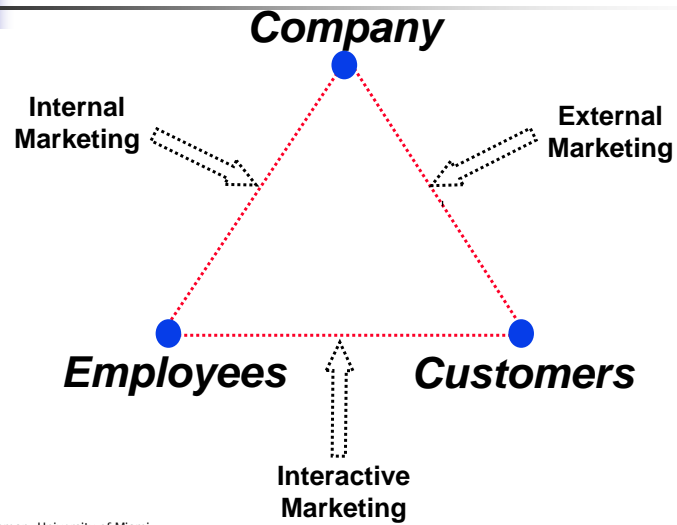
A. “Parsu” Parasuraman
University of Miami



Presentation Outline

- Brief overview of conceptual frameworks pertaining to technology's role in employee-customer interactions
- Observations about opportunities for research in the employee-technology-customer domain

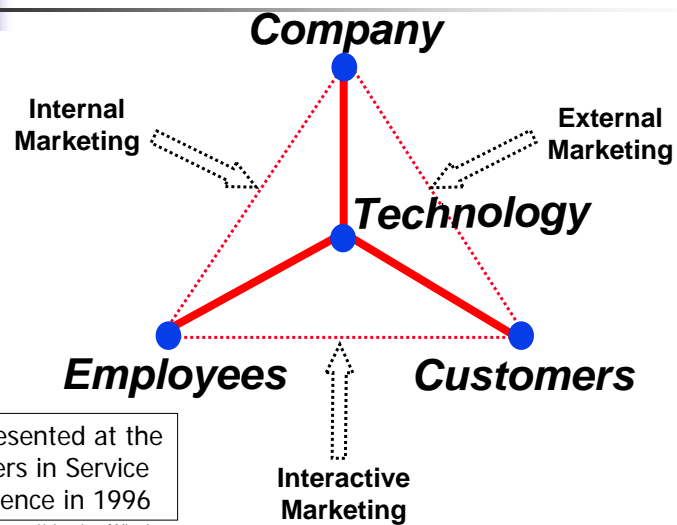
Triangle Model of Services Marketing



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Pyramid Model of Services Marketing

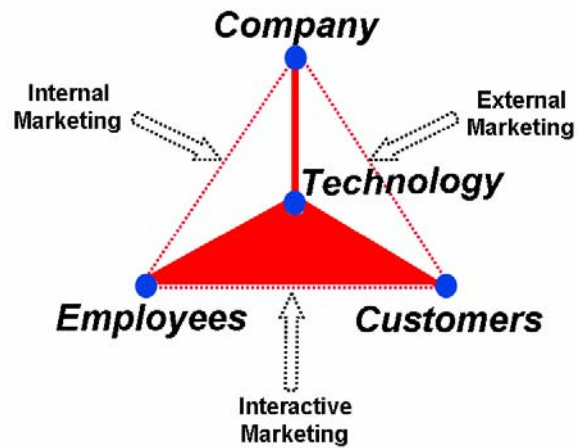


First presented at the
Frontiers in Service
Conference in 1996

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A Critical Facet of the Pyramid Model



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Different Modes of Employee-Technology-Customer Interactions

- Customers interacting directly with technology (i.e., through SSTs)
- Customers initiating contact with employees, but being directed to use an SST
- Customers interacting with employees who are 'enabled' through technology
- Customers having to interact with employees because of problems with an SST

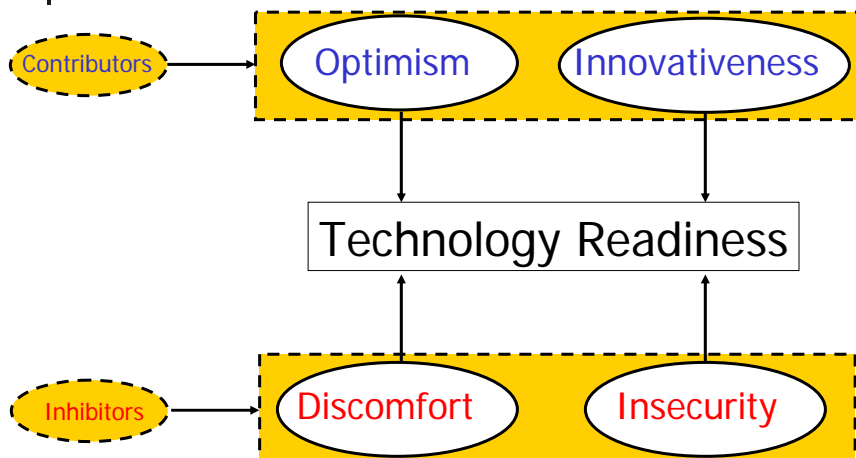
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Two Observations about the Different Interaction Modes

- Not all customers – or employees – may be equally enthusiastic or psychologically prone to adopt and use technology-based service systems – i.e., people vary in terms of their “technology readiness”
- Companies are introducing technology-based service systems at a rapid pace, motivated primarily by potential cost reduction and productivity improvement

Drivers of Technology Readiness



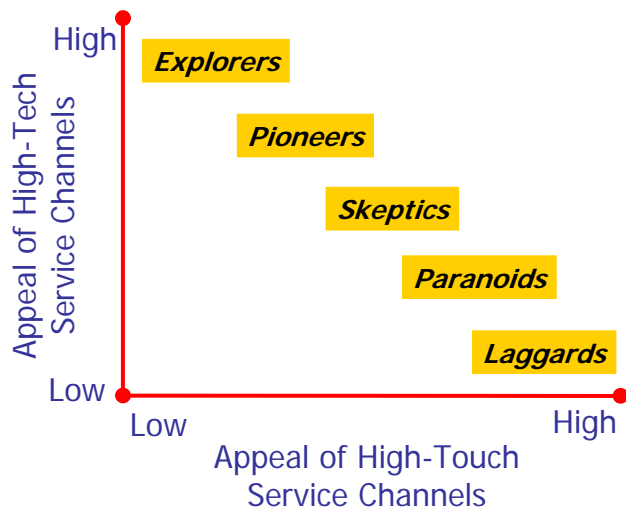
Five Segments Based on TR Scores

<u>Segments</u>	<u>TR Scores</u>			
	<i>Opt.</i>	<i>Inn.</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Ins.</i>
<i>Explorers</i>	High	High	Low	Low
<i>Pioneers</i>	High	High	High	High
<i>Skeptics</i>	Low	Low	Low	Low
<i>Paranoids</i>	High	Low	High	High
<i>Laggards</i>	Low	Low	High	High

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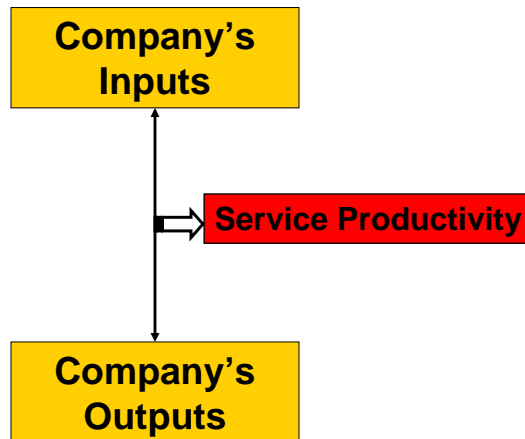
High-Tech versus High-Touch Customer Service



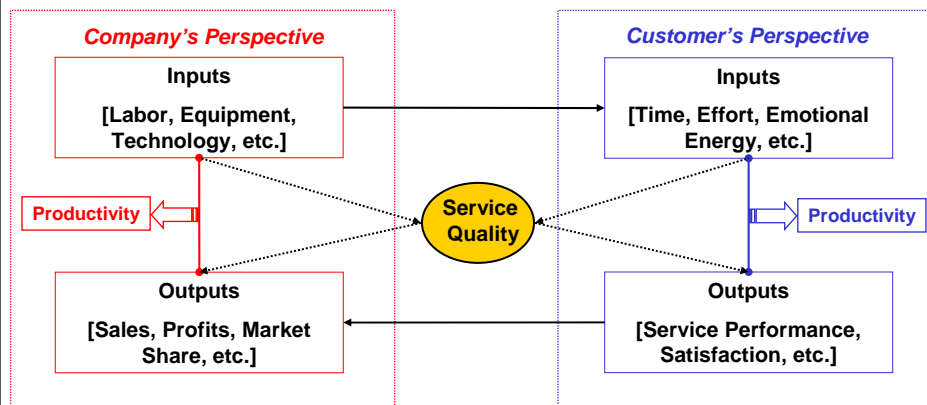
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A Simple Definition of Service Productivity



A Dual Company-Customer Perspective on Service Productivity





“Big Picture” Issues Worthy of Scholarly Research

- TR-based segmentation of employees and customers
- Optimal interaction modes for similar employee-customer segments based on TR
- Other factors – such as service-encounter type (e.g., routine vs. nonroutine) and phase (e.g., pre- vs. post-purchase) – that could influence the choice appropriate interaction modes
- Mathematical/analytical modeling of the tradeoffs between company-oriented and customer-oriented conceptualizations of service productivity
- Developing appropriate metrics for operationalizing various input and output constructs embedded in the dual conceptualization of service productivity



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