

# Cases and Instructions



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opening worlds of opportunity through the science of service

## Designing Customer-Focused Service Processes

Nancy J. Stephens, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Marketing  
Faculty Director, Online Executive Programs

# Blueprinting Case 1: Azure River Tubes

Azure River Tubes (ART), which has an exclusive concession agreement with the State Department of Natural Resources, offers tubing trips down the Azure River from Scenic Bend to Lookout Bridge, a distance of 12 miles. The Azure River is located about 15 miles south of Capitol City and runs through a series of canyons. The journey offers outstanding views and the chance to enjoy an undeveloped and unspoiled natural environment.

Most customers are college students and young adults from Capitol City who enjoy spending an afternoon in the sun floating down the scenic Azure River. Because it is hot and sunny, customers need to be prepared. They are advised by ART in its brochures, advertisements and website to bring sunscreen, hats and long-sleeved shirts to wear over their bathing suits. Many tubers forget at least one of these essential items. The ART Rental Shack at the river stocks a complete line of accessories for anyone who has forgotten something.

Customers start their journey down the Azure River at Scenic Bend, where they park their vehicles in a parking lot owned and maintained by ART. Parking costs \$5 for all day, but is free for those who spend at least \$20 in the ART Rental Shack.

Before they begin their tubing trip, customers must rent a tube at the ART Rental Shack. ART inventories over 200 tubes in a backroom of the rental shack. Two college students work there part-time, filling the tubes with air and maintaining them. Each tube is checked for air pressure and leaks before it is rented to a customer.

Customers can either bring their own refreshments or buy food and drink from the ART Rental Shack. In addition, ART will sell or rent small floating coolers to keep snacks cold. The coolers can be attached to a tube with a hooked rope.

At the end of the 3-4 hour trip, customers arrive at Lookout Bridge, where they exit the river. If they wish, they can take a shower at the ART Deck House next to the bridge. An ART van takes them back to their vehicles at Scenic Bend where they started.

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# Steps in Designing a



1. Identify the process to be blueprinted.
  - basic business concept
  - a service within a family of services
  - a specific service component
2. Identify the customer segment that receives the service.
3. Map the process from the customer's point of view.
4. Draw the line of interaction.
5. Draw the line of visibility.
6. Map the process from the customer contact person's point of view distinguishing visible (“onstage”) activities from invisible (“backstage”) activities.
7. Draw the line of internal interaction.
8. Link customer and contact person activities to the necessary support functions.
9. Add physical evidence
10. Add moments of truth, pain points and opportunities for improvement.

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# Azure River Tube Rental Blueprint

PHYSICAL  
EVIDENCE

ART  
Rental  
Shack  
appearanc  
e

Appear  
ance of  
tubes

Azure  
River  
appearanc  
e

ART van  
appearanc  
e and  
reliability

CUSTOMER  
ACTIONS

Park in  
Scenic  
Bend  
parking lot

Rent tube  
@ ART  
Rental  
Shack

Buy snacks  
at ART  
Rental  
Shack  
(optional)

Rent mini  
cooler at  
ART  
Rental  
Shack  
(optional)

Float down  
Azure River  
and a  
arrive at  
Lookout  
Ridge

Take shower  
at ART  
Deck House  
(optional)

Ride ART van  
back to  
Scenic Bend  
parking lot

ONSTAGE  
TECHNOLOGY

**External  
Pain Point**  
Visitor finds  
out parking  
costs \$5

**Moment  
of Truth**  
Are there  
enough  
tubes and  
are they  
priced  
right?

College  
students greet  
and help w/  
tube rentals

**External  
Pain Point**  
Visitor finds  
out that he  
must buy or  
rent a mini  
cooler if he  
does not  
have one

Take  
customers  
back to their  
car

CONTACT EMPLOYEE  
ONSTAGE ACTIONS

Fill tubes w/  
air and  
maintain  
them

Have ART  
Renal Shack  
stocked w/  
enough  
tubes, mini  
coolers and  
snacks

Clean and  
maintain  
Deck  
House

Make sure  
ART vans  
are clean  
and full of  
gas

SUPPORT  
PROCESSES

Maintain parking  
lot (refinish if  
there are  
potholes or  
cracks)

Purchase  
new tubes to  
replace old  
ones

**Internal Pain  
Point**  
During peak  
hours the two  
college  
students might  
be  
overwhelmed

Remodel or  
make  
repairs to  
ART Deck  
House

Repair vans  
if needed

line of interaction

line of visibility

line of internal interaction

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# Service Blueprint Components

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

CUSTOMER ACTIONS

line of interaction

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**"ONSTAGE" TECHNOLOGY ACTIONS**

"ONSTAGE" CONTACT EMPLOYEE ACTIONS

line of visibility

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"BACKSTAGE" CONTACT EMPLOYEE ACTIONS

line of internal interaction

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SUPPORT PROCESSES

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# Definitions of the Components

## PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

- Def: All tangibles that customers come in contact with that impact customer quality perceptions.

## CUSTOMER PHASES

## CUSTOMER ACTIONS

- Def: All steps, or groups of steps, that customers take or experience as part of the service process being examined. Phases are sets of related steps.

## "ONSTAGE" TECHNOLOGY ACTIONS

- Def: The actions by customer-facing technology (e.g., websites) that customers experience as part of the service process.

## "ONSTAGE" CONTACT EMPLOYEE ACTIONS

- Def: The contact employee actions that involve face-to-face interactions with customers.

## "BACKSTAGE" CONTACT EMPLOYEE ACTIONS

- Def: Other contact employee actions (not involving face-to-face customer interactions) including email/phone contact with customers, preparation work, and any activities that facilitate the service process.

## SUPPORT PROCESSES

- Def: Activities that facilitate the service process and are done by individuals who are not contact employees.



# Useful Symbols

## Moment of Truth

Customer-provider interaction which is critically important to the relationship.

Potential opportunity to improve experience, satisfy customer, demonstrate quality, etc.

## Opportunity to Improve

Gap felt by the provider but not by the customer which leads to internal friction or inefficiencies.

## External Pain Point

Gap felt by the customer and potentially provider which leads to lower service quality perceptions.

## Internal Pain Point

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# Draw Your Own Blueprint

Instructions: There is no “right” or “wrong” blueprint. Your team’s goal is to map out the process and determine what actions are necessary to produce *a great customer experience*, considering the human factors of the service process from the point of view of the customer.

The value in blueprinting is the discussion you have with your co-workers; you get insight by understanding different perspectives of employees who see customers face-to-face, who talk or email with customers only, and who never even see or interact with customers. All these people are responsible for giving your customer a great experience.

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# Thank you

## Good luck in designing customer-focused service processes.

**Nancy J. Stephens, Ph.D.**

[nancy.stephens@asu.edu](mailto:nancy.stephens@asu.edu)

<http://wpcarey.asu.edu/csl/>

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