

Animation 1.6

The Servuction Model is a way of thinking about the relationship between customers, information and physical assets. The concept of 'Servuction' is a blend of the words service and production. It recognises that operations which process customers can do so in two ways – through their physical infrastructure, that is the buildings, plant and equipment, or through their personnel.

Of course in most cases they use both. The model also shows that some of the infrastructure and some of the personnel may be seen by the customer and hence are 'front of house' (a phrase typically used in the hotel business) or 'front office' (the term typically used in banking); whilst some infrastructure and personnel are not seen, and hence are back of house or back office.

The third feature of the model shows that the customer experience is not simply affected by what the operation provides but also by other customers using that operation, the so-called co-consumers. In other words the experience of customer A is affected by the service they get from the infrastructure and personnel and by their interaction with customer B.

The model is also a framework for understanding what is termed the 'service encounter' – that is to say the nature of the customer's experience when receiving a service, and is extremely helpful in demonstrating and explaining some of the ways in which customer processing operations have been changing over the years.