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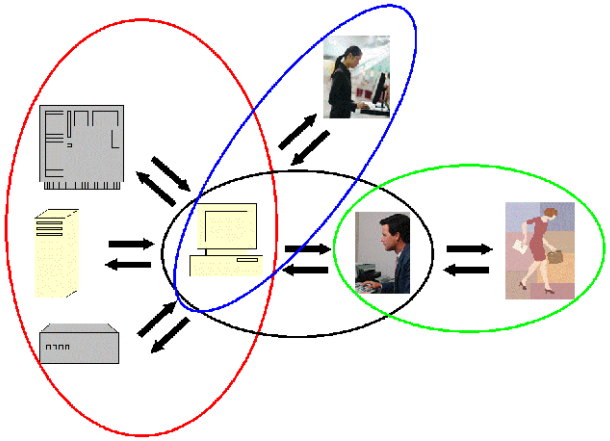
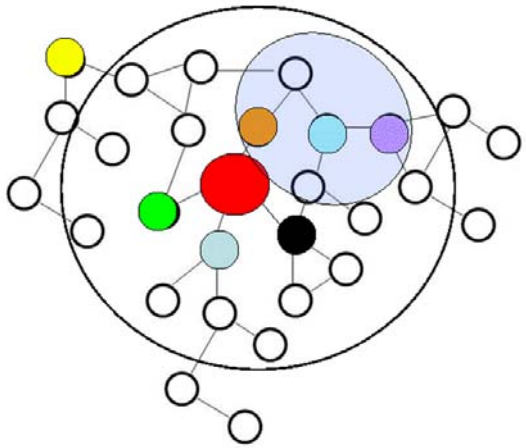




Designing “Service Systems”

Robert J. Glushko

UC Berkeley School of Information
Information & Service Design Program

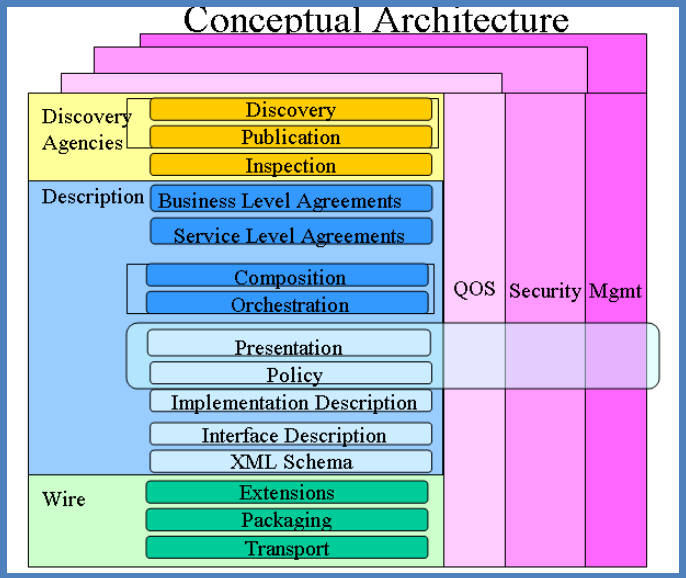
19 March 2009

Is “Service” a Homonym?

Personal Service

Self-Service

Web Service



If these are all “services,” are there any design concepts and methods apply to all of them?

Service Design Patterns

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- Adjusting the absolute and relative amount of interpersonal, physical, and informational interaction
- Adjusting the line of visibility
- Choosing a point of view
- Scoping the service system and the size of the “touchpoint windows”

Service Design Contexts

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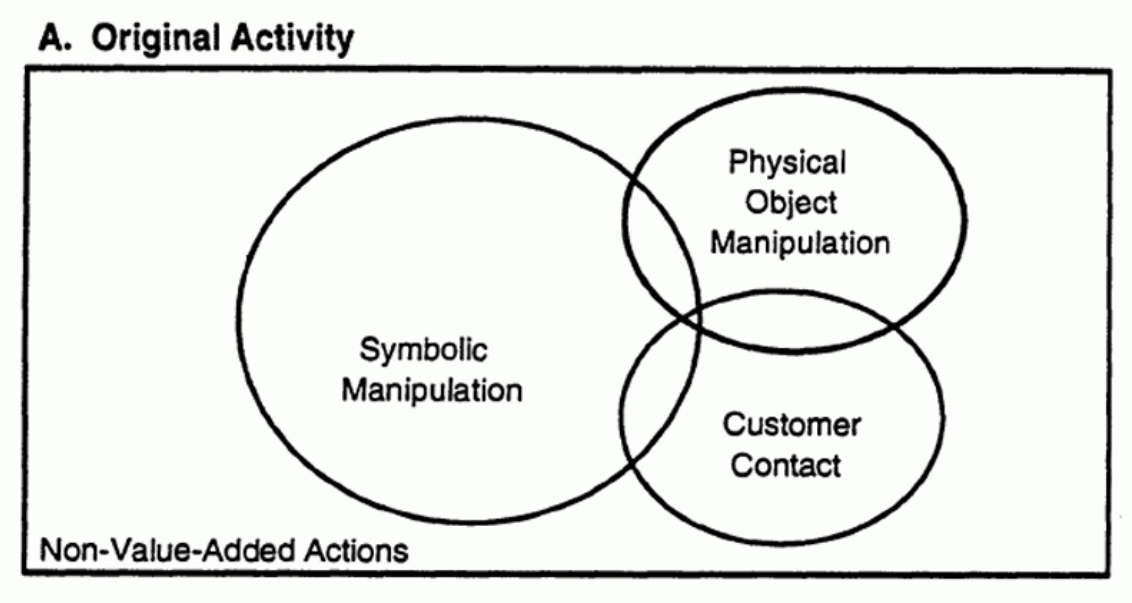
- Front stage – the continuum from “Personal service” to “Self-service”
- Back-stage intensive
- Multiple devices
- Multiple channels
- Location-based

Each design context emphasizes different goals and constraints and has characteristic design methods

Deconstructing Front Stage "Service" (Apte & Mason)

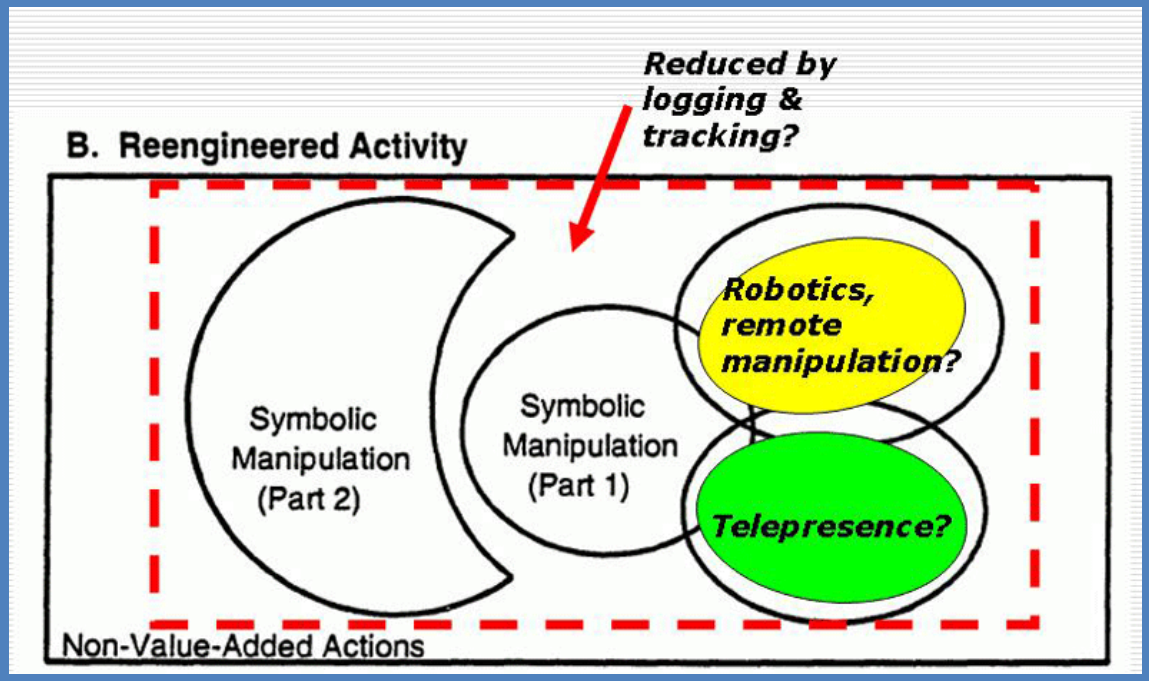
Service encounters can include:

- Interpersonal interaction
- Physical interactions
- Information processing and interchange



… Technology changes these proportions

- Person-to-person, technology-enhanced P2P, and self-service form a continuum
- Information can augment interpersonal and physical interactions
- And can also replace them



Telepresence & Telerobotics

Front Stage and Back Stage

Front Stage: where interactions with service customer / consumer happen

Back Stage: produces information and “stuff” needed by front stage

Placement of “line of visibility” is a design parameter

The McDonalds Experience

Front Stage

Back Stage

Gourmet Restaurant Experience

Front Stage

Back Stage

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Benihana Experience

Front Stage

Back Stage

Amazon.Com

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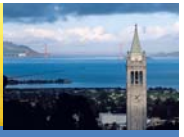


Front Stage

Retailer

Customer

Back Stage

Credit Authority

Warehouse / Distribution

Delivery Service

Point of View

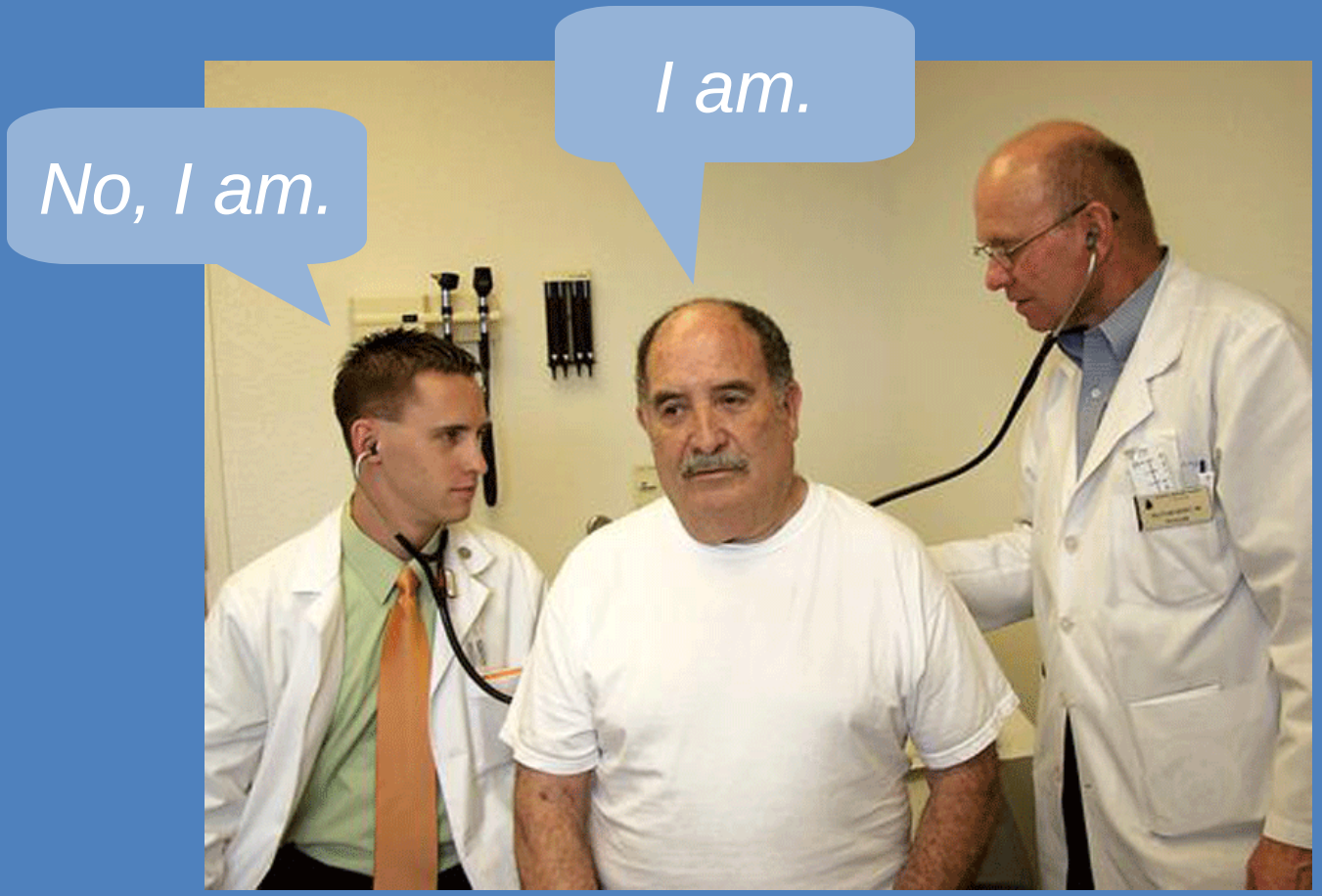
Designate some actor or service as the focal / primary consumer or customer

Typically the end of value chain or information flow, or where “users” are

Often arbitrary, and other actors or services could be alternative POVs

Who is the Service Customer?

In a teaching hospital



In a Cooking School?

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Back Stage

Front Stage

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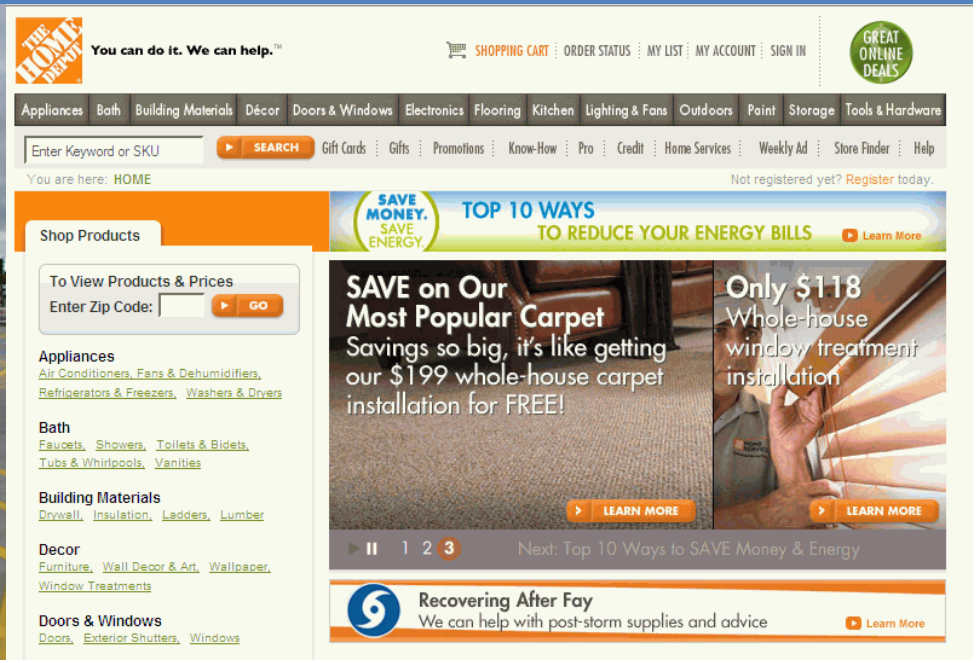
Multichannel Service System

Physical Store

Virtual Store



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Multidevice Service Systems

Location-Based / Context-Aware Services

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Location-based Service

Context-aware Service

Service System Scope

- Design techniques for person-to-person services typically describe the service from the perspective of the customer and emphasize the “touch points”
- But the scope extends before and after these touch points
- The scope is more complex with multiple channels, multiple devices, or location-based services
- Complex service experiences are paths that traverse through multiple service systems
  - Yahoo…Googlemaps…511…BART…Muni…511… OpenTable…Yelp… OpenTable…Twitter…511

Service System Scope

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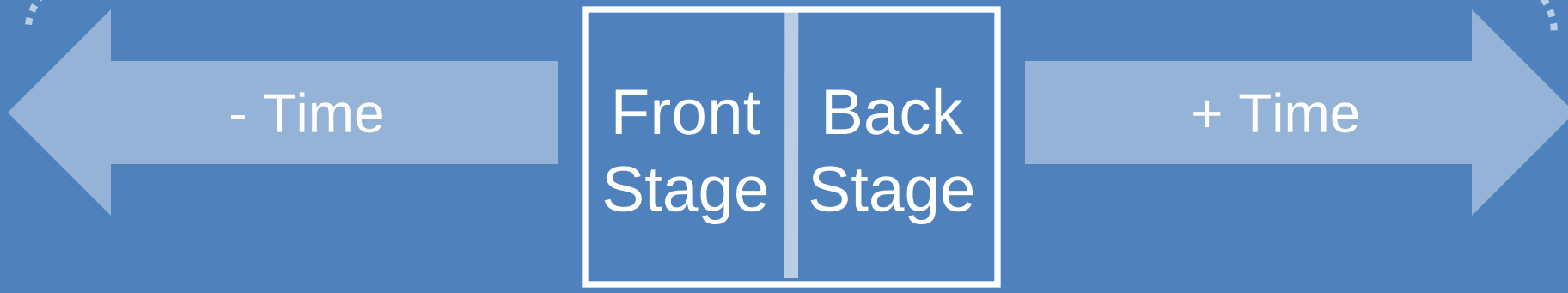
Time is a primary dimension of scope
but not the only one



Touch Point
"Window"

The Restaurant Experience

Service Scope

Touchpoints

Primary Producer

Supply Chain

Delivery

The Stage

The Massage Experience

Touchpoint

The Amazon Experience

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Touchpoint → Service Scope → Touchpoint

The Stage

Warehouse

Wrapping / Distribution

Stage Again

Service System Scopes

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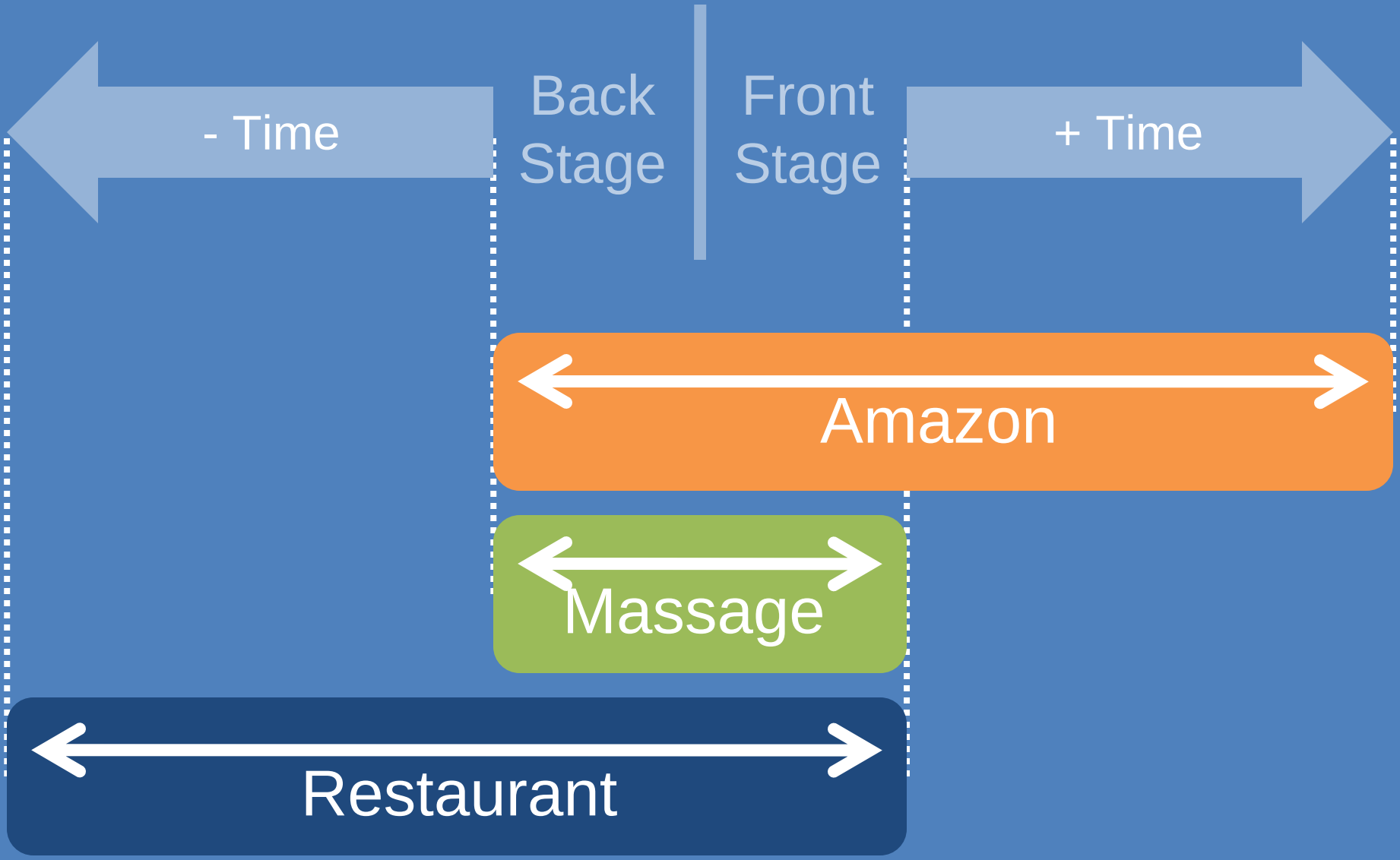

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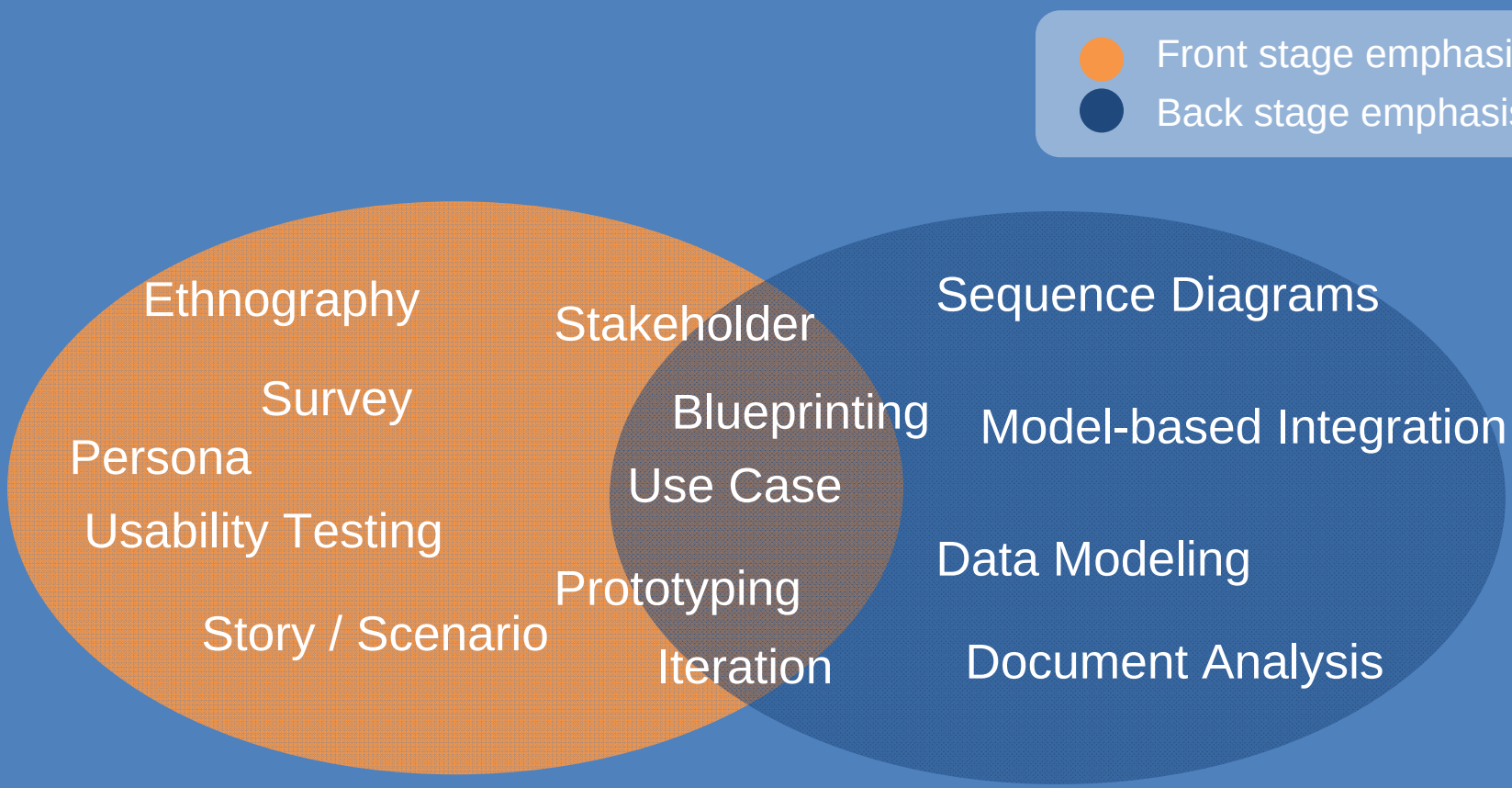
A Methodology?

- “Service system” is too broad for a prescriptive design methodology
- Iterative scoping (and defining the POV in) the service system determines relative importance of each context
- Choose a portfolio of appropriate design methods for the combination of contexts

Portfolio of Methods