



EXPERIENCE DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The following paper reviews the literature and presents case studies on the construction of unforgettable experiences in the search for a competitive advantage in the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industries. Methodologically, an analysis of the existing bibliography is carried out, contextualizing it with observations made in the field. Initially, the objective is to identify in the existing literature good experience design and management practices and the elements that build the perfect experience. Secondly, case studies are carried out in order to discover whether this literature has been applied and with what results. The results found show that many companies continue to ignore the importance of experience design and management, even though there are a few success stories.

Key words: Experience design; Experience Management; Design Thinking; Product Development; Hospitality Industry.

INTRODUCTION

Good quality alone is no longer enough for the survival of a business, product or service, whatever its branch or activity. Good quality is understood as the combination of product quality, service quality and customer service quality, including after-sales quality, when relevant (TAKEUCHI and QUELCH, 1983; MATHUR and DEWANI, 2015).

More and more established and traditional brands are investing in ambience and service, to complement their fundamental business. Take a hospital for example: top-notch medical services are just the gateway; without them no paying customer would consider going into hospital. It is up to these establishments to invest in what is understood as hospital hospitality, that is, in architecture, ambience, administrative service including pre- and post-sales and, why not, in cuisine. Who said hospital food has to be bland? Specialized chefs are being hired to change this (pre)conception, keeping food healthy but tasty (SCHIFFMAN, 2018).

Interestingly, reading the blog of Folha de São Paulo columnist, Alexandra Forbes, she mentions a trend among multi-star restaurants around the world towards a minimalist ambience, in which "being 'cool' means having bare tables, only with cutlery, and waiters who are super informal in

speech and dress” (FORBES, 2015).

Just like the columnist, even though we frequent bars and restaurants well below the aforementioned multi-star restaurants, we must agree that the experience goes far beyond the food. Going out to eat, whether for leisure or business, has to be a pleasant experience and the rites of perfect service and ambiance are an integral and necessary part. Waiters with low sensitivity to deal with the diversity of situations of each public are barely tolerable in fast food chains.

Extending the issue of rite, of the “pomp and circumstance” that make an experience unique, there are many who, despite having state-of-the-art home theaters at their disposal, cannot do without the pleasure of entering the dark room of a cinema, with a huge bucket of popcorn and an equally large glass of soda.

Given this context, it is important to understand that it is the customer experience and design thinking that make it up.

User experience

The field of experience studies deals with research, design and evaluation of experiences that users have when using a given system (ISO, 2010). Hence the expression ‘user experience’ can have different meanings. The multidisciplinary nature of these studies and practices has led to a series of definitions, varying according to the different perspectives of scholars. These perspectives range from psychology to business management, with emphasis ranging from quality to added value.

Given that there is no definition that encompasses all perspectives, below is a list of definitions proposed by different authors:

User experience is not centered on the internal functioning of a product or service, but how they work externally, in the dimension where a person comes into contact with them (GARRETT, 2011).

In a more synthetic view, it is a momentary sensation, essentially evaluative (good/bad), during the interaction with a product or service (HASSENZAHN, 2008).

According to Sutcliffe (2010), user experience is the judgment of the quality of the product arising from the interaction experience and the qualities of the product that engender effective use and pleasure.

Or the value derived from the interaction(s) with a product or service is the supporting cast in the context of use (SWARD and MACARTHUR, 2007).

Jimenez and Talledo (2022) found that word of mouth is one of the determining elements for evaluating business marketing performance. In this sense, it is precisely the customer's perception of the experience that will determine whether or not it will contribute to the word of mouth marketing of the business.

Design Thinking as a way of thinking

The great theoretical contribution to experience design comes from Tim Brown (2009),

defining Design Thinking as a mental matrix, different from the logical-mathematical reasoning prevalent in the business world.

Just as an illustration, there is an interesting academic doctoral work on the art of drawing in which the author spends an entire chapter debunking the myths about the “right way” to draw a person. According to this author (Edwards, 2012), this stereotypical thinking usually leads to “ball and stick” figures. It is necessary to strip away these prejudices to really be able to see – and draw what is actually being seen. Hence, stereotypical concepts do not help to see, understand and solve certain types of problems.

Brown (2009) reports the same type of difficulty when dealing with teams of employees designated by the company to monitor a given project. The Design Thinking method includes several stages of research, prototyping and testing until the solution emerges from apparent chaos. Typically, it divides the process into three distinct and overlapping spaces: there is an inspiration space, in which insights are collected from all possible sources, followed by an ideation space, when these insights are translated into ideas, and a final stage implementation process, in which the best ideas are developed into a concrete action plan. Brown (2009) highlights that these are overlapping spaces and not a sequence of steps inserted into a rigorous methodology.

Summarizing the issue in a few words, there is Stewart's (1986) phrase that “a problem cannot be solved at the same level [with the same tools] with which it was created.”

Therefore, the problem to be studied is to verify whether or not the perfect experience is being delivered to the customer in the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry, identifying possible points that can contribute to improving this experience. We understand that there is a vast literature on the subject, with works dating back over 50 years and terms that have become jargon in business. It is then a question of discovering whether this literature has been applied and with what results. To this end, in this work we intend to identify, in the existing literature on the subject, the good practices that make up a perfect experience for the customer. And once these practices are defined, we will carry out observations made in the field, using a mix of the methodology of asystematic participant observation, proposed by Kawulich (2005) and the case study method according to Yin (2009).

The objective is to determine whether good experience management practices are being used in the daily practice of companies in the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry. To do this, we will initially study the existing literature in order to identify the fundamental elements for designing the perfect customer experience. Secondly, we will select a sample of cases from the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry to be studied, verifying whether these good practices indicated in the literature are actually being made available to customers.

Furthermore, the collection and systematization of this literature spread across different areas of study can serve other researchers to expand this knowledge and so that entrepreneurs can take advantage of it to add it to their knowledge base for the creation of products, services and innovative and successful businesses.

The research is justified primarily because a good experience is essential for returning customers, especially in the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry, given that customers are increasingly looking for unforgettable experiences. As an example, a customer, faced with two businesses with similar products and prices, will choose the one that provides the best experience. Additionally, discounting the period of low movement during the recent Covid-19 Pandemic (2020-2022), the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry is a major contributor to the countries' economy, having a low carbon footprint and employing many people. It should not be forgotten that good experience management contributes to improving the management of the business itself, with a consequent increase in profits.

METHODOLOGY

Methodologically speaking, in this work, we will initially seek, through bibliographical research, to identify existing best practices and, from there, verify in the real world of the market whether companies are using these best practices and at what stage of maturity they are in this use.

Bibliographical research in the context of this article has the function of substantiating and contextualizing the fundamental concepts of Design Thinking and experience design, the vocabulary of which ends up being inserted into management fads, having meanings diluted by non-specialists. We also intend to expand this research to related and accessory, but no less important, terms, such as customer satisfaction and contentment, based on authors such as Tim Brown (2009), Jan Carlzon (1987), Bernd Schmitt (1999; 2003), Alcántara (2014), Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi (2000) among many others.

In order to complement and eventually corroborate or not what is presented in the literature, we chose the Case Study method, as proposed by Yin (2009). Additionally, we will use the method of asystematic observation of cases, as proposed by Kawulich (2005). In this method, we seek to frequent establishments, experiencing and living in practice the same experience as other customers. The establishment does not know it is being observed. It should be noted that in the specific case of Cinema Paissandu, only one of the authors attended it, from the beginning of the 1970s until its closure in the 1990s. The Spa case was the result of consultancy work.

It is also worth remembering that the reason for choosing case studies aligns with one of the objectives, which is to compare whether, in fact, the afore mentioned good practices recommended by literature are being used in the real world by companies and offered to the client/tourist, and to what degree. The term asystematic observation as proposed by Kawulich (2005) involves the free fruition of the experience, as if we were customers, without those responsible for the establishment knowing the purpose of the visit. It allows one to perceive the experience freely, exactly as the customer would. Experience is perception, feeling, free fruition.

Sampling

The sampling used was unstructured, seeking, however, to bring examples across the spectrum of the hospitality industry, including resorts and other related industries in the areas of leisure and entertainment, such as spas, parties and cinemas. Given that the hospitality industry encompasses the tourist's search for a complete experience that includes not only accommodation itself, but leisure and entertainment options.

RESULTS

Next, to allow us to identify the elements that make up a good customer experience design, we present the results of the bibliographical research and bring significant extracts from the existing literature, from the initial and seminal works for understanding the problem, to more recent works dealing with relevant issues on the topic. After that, we bring the results of asystematic participant observation carried out in the cases studied so that it can be verified whether there is practical application, or not, of the theoretical recommendations.

Experience design – the classics

Although not all of the works mentioned below deal specifically with experience design, a more contemporary term, they all consider the consumer as central to the conception and management of businesses, focusing on the importance of a positive experience.

In his pioneering 2009 book, Tim Brown, – CEO of the company Ideo –, focused not only on product design, but also on the use of design methodology applied to different businesses –, proposes that the type of non-linear reasoning and “hypertextual” characteristic of designers is transposed to the business environment, providing fresh perspectives for innovation in various areas.

This type of methodological reasoning contrasts sharply with the solutions used by more Cartesian and mathematical thinkers, accustomed to choosing the best solution extracted from a pre-existing “menu”, typical of linear/vertical reasoning (de Langhe *et al.* 2017). Design Thinking, on the contrary, seeks to extract solutions from associative processes, free imagination and abductive reasoning, instead of inductive and deductive reasoning, more common in regular problem solving. By abductive reasoning we mean that which is always based on the question “What if...?”.

Returning to Brown (2009), Design Thinking is a human-centered business methodology, that is, user-centered. It's about thinking and designing products and services with specific users in mind. It is not just a matter of abstractly imagining how a certain market segment would use something, but of actually observing, researching and understanding how this something will actually be used.

Although Brown's proposal is understood as very modern, the academic literature focused on creating unique and unforgettable experiences aimed at customer loyalty is quite old, as will be seen below.

Jan Carlzon (1987), former CEO of the Swedish airline SAS between 1981 and 1994, realized that each contact between customers and the company could create empathy or destroy it. He called

these contacts “moments of truth” and recounted his experience of turning an annual loss of \$17 million a year into a profit of \$54 million in just one year in his 1987 book. By implementing a program titled Putting People First, Carlzon decentralized decisions, letting service professionals immediately resolve customer problems without appealing to their management. His next step, together with TMI, the consultancy he had hired to turn around SAS, was the Scandinavian Service School, aimed at training employees in the new way of doing business. This new way also involved flattening the organizational chart and empowering employees. The system was soon adopted by other companies, competitors or not, reducing the competitive advantage obtained. What remained of the experience, in most of the corporate universe, was only the flattening of the organizational chart. The fundamental thing – exemplary service – was relegated to oblivion or a nominal commitment, without actually existing in the vast majority of companies, as well as employee empowerment. Everyone who has ever had contact with an automated customer service system understands how “important” they are to the organization.

In this regard, another entrepreneur turned author, Karl Albrecht, in his 1985 book, written on the threshold of the digital era and therefore before the spread of the internet, mentions in his updated 2001 edition that “the irrational use of digital technology to depopulate the interface with the consumer will turn into one of the biggest mistakes that many companies will ever make” (ALBRECHT & ZEMKE, 1991).

Illustrating the statement, Albrecht and Zemke (1991) cite the case of the aviation giant United Airlines losing customers, irritated by the almost impossibility of interacting with a human being. The case, unfortunately, is not unique.

In this sense, it is important to highlight that marketing needs to understand the characteristics of the experience desired by the customer. In Brazil, the food platform, similar to the Spanish platform Glovo, offers value to its customers precisely because it allows them to place orders in restaurants without any human contact. It is worth noting that for Albrecht and Zemke (2001) the irrational use of digital technology means the indiscriminate depopulation of the interface with the customer, without considering the consumer's needs in relation to that specific experience. Even in an experience where interactivity is unwanted, the customer needs to be able to count on ready human support whenever the robot does not meet their expectations.

Technology, both in service and marketing, can and should be used. According to Salas (2022), social networks, for example, are a good tool for connecting organizations and customers emotionally.

It is needless to say that the book by Albrecht and Zemke (2001) is another fundamental work for the design of superior quality services. Its original publisher, Dow Jones-Irwin, claims it was its most successful title in history, with more than two million copies sold.

Bernd Schmitt, PhD in psychology graduated from the University of Heidelberg, Germany, and professor at Columbia University, specialized in experience management and marketing, with several

published titles. According to him (1999), “The marketing of emotion or experience is a new line of action that has been the secret of success in a period in which globalization has transformed products and services into commodities”.

In another work, Schmitt (2003) highlights that satisfied consumers are a safe source of revenue for companies, returning and referring new customers. In yet another work (2012) he brings suggestions based on his training as a psychologist to boost relationships with clients and create a positive experience.

Still in the academic area, there are two classic works by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985; 1990) proposing studies to establish the gaps between the quality of services offered by companies and the quality of these services actually perceived by customers. The methodology developed by the authors includes a questionnaire adaptable to different situations and ways of extracting business intelligence from the data collected. Part of the academic community already considers the method to be outdated, while there is little use of it outside academia.

There is another work, on the borderline between business and academia, taking the concept of experience to a new level. Norwegian Rolf Jensen published his book in 1999, which was warmly received by academia and little read by its essential target audience – the business community. In *The Dream Society*, never translated in Brazil, Jensen (1999) proposes that dreams will direct the marketing [and business] of the future. The tangible loses space to the intangible. From this perspective, products and services would tend to follow the “desires of the heart” to the detriment of ones rational thoughts. Jensen (1999) also highlights the importance of business narratives, or stories. From this perspective, the author mentions that nowadays any wristwatch is reliable and, if the consumer is looking for the right time, their problem will be solved for US\$10.00. On the other hand, if what the consumer is looking for is a story, if the watch appeals to the heart, if it represents a certain lifestyle, status or adventure, the price can reach 15 thousand dollars. Hence, a story has many buyers and great added value, and the consumer can take a watch along with it. It is about “offering exclusive and eternally memorable events, due to their form, their meaning and the emotion experienced” (JENSEN, 1999).

It is not surprising that Story Telling, derived from this seminal study, is one of the trends in current marketing (WOODSIDE, 2010).

In this regard, Jiao and Zhang (2015) state that the third industrial revolution centered on information is imposing changes in the structure of consumption. Cultural consumption is taking precedence over mere use. Cultural meanings begin to guide purchasing decisions.

Working with the intangible as a monetizable asset, there are works by Sveiby (1997; 2001) and Allee (1999).

James Gilmore and Joseph Pine (1999) highlight the importance of experience for the consumer, remembering that goods and services are no longer sufficient, and that the focus must be on promoting and providing unique experiences.

According to these authors, it is necessary to provide memorable emotions, focused simultaneously on the innovation of both the product and service and the experience itself. In the latter lies the new value, which drives the experience economy. The subtitle of his book is *Work is Theater and Every Business a Stage*, which means that there is a performance to be presented to the consumer and that it must be carefully scripted and choreographed, as in a play or film. This is experience design in essence.

Finally, there is the book by Slack *et al.*, in the 2010 edition, in which the authors deal with what they call product design, aimed at carefully planning what will be done and how it will be done. The details of the Product/Service Development and Production functions form a conceptual and practical framework that only needs to be called experience design, given that the focus is always on the customer (SLACK *et al.*, 2010).

Experience Design – recent work

Alcântara *et al.* (2014) state that this is the era of experience, and that the experience economy is the next step after the service economy. Many industries (in the sense of business segments and not factories) seek to offer unique experiences that can range from chewing gum, having a coffee, shopping, staying in hotels, driving vehicles, visiting cities and even taking a shower. Given this, experience, design and its development have become prominent disciplines.

St.Amant (2018) highlights the importance of context and environment in what he defines as the overlap and interconnection between social, political, technological contexts, among others that define how we use items to interact with the world around us. A suggestion for the study of such contexts starts from the questions who [is the user?], what [do these users expect as a result of the interaction?], when [does this interaction occur?], where [does the interactive activity occur?], why [is this user engaged in activity X using the item?] and how to [identify the different factors that affect the use of an item?].

In another work, St.Amant (2018) draws attention to the importance of considering international contexts in experience and usability, given that cultural traits can interfere with the way an item is used.

Hassenzahl (2010) defines experience as an episode, a piece of time spent by someone, with images, sounds, feelings and thoughts, motives and actions [...] intimately intertwined, stored in memory, labeled, relived and communicated to others. According to the same author, an experience is a story that emerges from an individual's dialogue with his or her world through action. This last statement echoes some of the authors cited above, particularly Jensen (1999).

It can be added that user experience is a consequence of the brand image, presentation, functionality, system performance, interactive behavior and assistive capabilities of the interactive system, psychological and physical state of the user as a function of their previous experience, their attitudes, skills and personality, in addition to the context of use (ISO, 2010). It is worth highlighting

that the above definition does not only apply to a technology context, but can be transposed to scenarios ranging from a store to a call center, for example.

In short, user experience is the totality of end users' perceptions when interacting with a product or service. These perceptions include effectiveness (how good is the end result?), efficiency (how fast or price?), emotional satisfaction (does it feel good?), and the quality of the relationship with the entity that created the product or service (which expectations are created for subsequent interactions?) (KUNIAVSKY, 2010; GOODMAN, KUNIAVSKY, MOED, 2013).

Williamson and Kowalewski (2018) propose a usability model that they defined as an atomic model, in which stakeholders such as users, customers, organizations, employees, etc. gravitate around a core formed by user-centered design, usability studies, civic engagement, heuristic evaluation, hypertextual design and information architecture. In other words, a central nucleus of good theory surrounded by different types of users.

In 2000, Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi argued that the science of psychology was incapable of discerning what makes life worth living. Faced with doubt, both created the branch of psychology called Positive Psychology, a theoretical framework on which Bernd Schmitt (1999, 2003, 2012), among others such as Kahneman, (1999, 2011), Lopez and Snyder, (2009); Lyubomirsky, (2007); Seligman, (2011) base their studies.

The fundamental foundation of the work of Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi (2000) is happiness as a sum of happy and rewarding experiences, in addition to the feeling of a full, meaningful and satisfactory life.

With sufficient information about the preferences of prospective users, as well as what they consider to be happy and rewarding experiences, it is possible to proceed with a cohesive and coherent experience design project. However, driving professionals focused on quick results and tight budgets crazy, it is absolutely necessary to allocate time and space for errors.

Following the bibliographical research proposed above, some cases are presented which are considered significant for understanding the issues, allowing their comparison with the literature, aiming to evaluate their success in applying theoretical precepts.

THE CASES

Two resorts

A recent trip to Maceió, Alagoas, Northeast Brazil, led to day use visits to two resorts on the same beach. In the first, the unimposing entrance led to comfortable facilities, with sun lounges, hammocks and small tables arranged in kiosks or under large umbrellas, allowing guests to be relatively alone, separated from other groups. The entire edge of the private beach was taken up by these comfortable islands, followed further back by larger kiosks for larger groups. There was a small army of helpful waiters, easily identifiable by their yellow t-shirts and visors with the resort's logo. The service was quick and efficient, with attractive food and drink options on the menus abundantly

distributed on the tables and lounges. In addition to the ocean front, there were boat rentals for tours, massage kiosks with efficient and friendly masseuses, more restaurants, game areas and several freshwater pools.

The sparkling wine ordered came in bottles placed neatly in metal buckets with ice, coarse salt and alcohol to maintain the temperature, and served in very thin glass glasses. The other drinks were beautiful and colorful and the food was fresh, tasty and well presented.

The second resort had been acquired by an international hotel chain and, to be fair, it was still in the adjustment phase. The entrance was imposing but empty, leading to a passage to the pool area, the restaurant and a small bar. A lake or stream allowed the use of kayaks and small boats, with a beautiful natural landscape. However, on what could be called the ocean front, there was a thatched bar and plastic lounges with few umbrellas. Food and drinks had to be picked up at the bar, with only three options of dry and almost cold savory snacks in large *rechauds*, drinks and sparkling wines served in plastic cups.

There was a stark price difference between both resorts, with the first costing more than twice as much as the second. Despite this difference, the participating group would repeat the first experience and try to forget the second.

A Spa

A Spa in Rio de Janeiro wanted to implement changes to attract more customers. The hired consultancy began its work by researching the biggest customer complaints, noting that these referred to scheduling and meeting appointments with doctors, therapists and beauticians, with the quality of the facilities, given that the Spa operated in an old mansion that had undergone several renovations at different times and in different styles, and with difficult parking for consultations and procedures.

While carrying out a cosmetic renovation, aiming to unify the general appearance of the facilities, eliminating stairs and replacing them with ramps, facilitating access between different floor levels, and seeking a homogenous color scheme for walls and furniture for all environments, solutions were sought for the other aspects.

The issue of constant delays in services was explained by the partners as arising from other procedures that could extend beyond what was expected, causing the delays. The proposed solution included the employment of a team of professionals who would begin pre-service and even complete it, if the specialist was not essential.

The small existing parking lot was always occupied by employees, leaving little or no space for customers. The proposed solution led to the negotiation of parking spaces for employees in a nearby parking lot, freeing up internal spaces only for customers.

The difficult part and, let's say, not implemented, proposed the inclusion of ambient music developed by specialists used to selecting and changing songs to adapt them to a desired heart rate. The technique is widely used by gyms, which seek a higher heart rate, aiming for greater energy

consumption, and by large retail chains that seek enthusiasm for impulse purchases. The idea was calming music, reducing the heart rate. The other proposal included the addition of a specially developed aroma, along the lines of aromas developed for many hotels and retail chains, with the same purpose as music – to lower the heart rate and calm the patient before consultations and procedures. Both proposals came up against the rigid training of the members, who classified them as something close to voodoo.

Even partially implemented, the project brought a 20% increase in customers in the months following the changes.

An electronic music party

A major Brazilian beer brand promoted a series of parties during the summer of 2018 across all major Brazilian capitals. Apparently, market research showed that each region had distinct musical preferences, distributing musical attractions accordingly. There was forró and axé in the Northeast, country and pop music in São Paulo and electronic music in Rio de Janeiro.

The version tested was the Rio version, tried together with a large group of electronic music lovers, who frequent big parties in the country and abroad. The main attraction of the night was a French DJ with an international reputation.

The group arrived early, in the middle of a DJ performance that opened the event. To everyone's surprise, even though they had purchased tickets for the VIP box, in which there were supposed to be waiters to serve, drinks and food had to be purchased using tokens sold at some cashiers located outside the area where the music was performed. There was only beer from the sponsoring brand and vodka from an unknown brand, already mixed with energy drink, served in large plastic cups with ice, in which the drinks quickly heated up, becoming watery and impossible to drink.

The international attraction performed at around two in the morning, a time considered too early for those attending such parties, who usually continue until well past seven or eight in the morning. The place was, therefore, still relatively empty of public. The next two presentations were mediocre, far from the standard expected for the party, especially considering the Frenchman's presentation. The disaster culminated with the entry of a funk group from the hills of Rio. Funk fans and electronic sound lovers are two urban tribes that simply don't mix. There were boos and jeers and the crowd quickly dispersed around three in the morning, discouraging latecomers from entering.

It was more than evident that the survey of public preferences was schematic and inefficient, neglecting the established habits of electro party goers from Ibiza, Greece and Croatia to the interior of São Paulo state: this public does not consume beer, relegating the brand's marketing efforts to the void. The target group consumes large quantities of vodka, both with energy drinks and with juices and other sugar-free mixtures. The drink is always consumed in previously chilled bottles and glass cups. Vodka brands are preferably imported, with brands such as Cîroc, Absolut and Gray Goose predominating. Unbranded vodka with unidentified origin is considered inadmissible. Sparkling wines

are also among the preferences, with no option at all at the party. The arrival of the funk group sealed the failure of the initiative in terms of its ability to deliver an experience to the public that was minimally aligned with expectations.

An unforgettable cinema

Cine Paissandu has established itself as a favorite among generations of Rio cinephiles due to the exhibition of cult films, notably European ones, since the 1950s, being responsible for forming the taste of a vast public and many other film professionals. .

In the 70s the theater was purchased by the French chain Cinema 1 and improvements to the facilities were introduced. Among them, was the best cinema experience in Rio de Janeiro at the time: an anteroom reserved for smokers – at a time when smoking was socially acceptable, but not allowed in cinemas and theaters – and, to the delight of the rest of the public, where you could drink beer and enjoy snacks while watching the film. This space was separated from the normal exhibition room by a glass wall, preventing smoke and other odors from invading the rest of the room. There was a dim light that only allowed glasses and plates to be properly located.

The cinema was sold once again in the 80s to the Brazilian group Estação, slowly declining at the rate of the arrival of multiplexes in shopping malls and the extinction of neighborhood cinemas, finally closing at the end of the 90s. Currently, there is a movement for its reopening, not only for its historical and emotional value for the Rio cinephile public, but also for the experience never repeated in other theaters.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The literature presented highlights some important points for creating and managing an unforgettable experience.

Firstly, the involvement of the entire team in this effort, with the empowerment of employees in order to solve problems that may arise. Next, it is observed that the design of the experience must be done from the customer perspective, that is, a reverse logic is applied, in which instead of making an offer and hoping that it is accepted, it starts with research into customer desires and needs to develop products and services, echoing Brown (2009).

People seek contact with people, that is, automated systems should be kept to a minimum and, if absolutely necessary, a human option for problem solving should be available. Additionally, if technology is essential, social networks are a better option, given the possibility of interactivity with human beings. Understanding the gaps between supply and demand and correcting them remains fundamental, regardless of what may be determined to be outdated or not. What works is never outdated.

Sveiby (1997; 2001) and Allee (1999), corroborating Jensen (1999), should be remembered in order to highlight that intangibles such as emotion and satisfaction have monetary value. The team

must be deeply imbued with the importance of the experience for the customer and the steps must be choreographed in detail, according to Gilmore and Pine (1999) and Slack *et al.* (2010).

From Brown (2009) to Alcántara (2014) and St. Amant (2018) show that experience must be designed and that international contexts must be observed.

Every effort towards a positive experience must aim at customer happiness, according to Seligman and Czikszentmihályi (2000).

Starting with the comment by columnist Alexandra Forbes (2015), the experience of a restaurant goes far beyond the food, as in the case of the hospital, in which medical services and food are the gateway, no matter the standard of the hospital or restaurant. In the perception of a large part of the clientele, including the columnist and the authors of this work, minimalism is easily understood as stinginess, carelessness and lack of attention towards the customer and ends up generating a non-repeatable experience.

In the specific case of cinema, the unique experience leaves people with longing and an eternal feeling of "I want more", giving rise to attempts to reactivate the closed screening room. The question always arises: why didn't other rooms repeat the experience and capitalize on it?

Failure to understand customers' consumption habits resulting in the wrong music, the wrong drink in the wrong temperature, and in plastic cups are details that ruin an experience that was intended to be pleasurable. There are always people willing to pay more for more rewarding experiences. In the specific case of the party, even though citations do not fit into conclusions of works, the famous phrase by Peter Drucker (1963) comes to mind: "There is nothing quite so useless, as doing with great efficiency, something that should not be done at all."

It is now understood that intangibles, including user experience, are real assets, which actually impact the profitability of companies. It is surprising that there is so little attention paid to them. The work by Allee (1999) mentioned above specifically deals with the tangibilization and valuation of intangibles.

It can be observed throughout the text that literature on experience design, although under different names, has a long history not only in academia, but in business publications easily found in any bookstore, often written by authors from the market, with real experience in day-to-day business. It is also surprising that it is so little read and even less applied in the daily practice of companies.

The Design Thinking process is particularly suitable for the task of creating unforgettable experiences due to its practice in researching needs, prototyping possible solutions and testing them, whether with panels made up of members of the target audience, or in the real world of market, in controlled experiments.

Finally, it is also clear that the experience can not only be designed, but also carefully managed, to maximize profits.

However, there is a lot to improve in companies that are still in their infancy in the design and management of experience and for this, this article suggests the use of Design Thinking and its



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correlate Business Design as the main tools.

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