

# Beyond the Goods-Service Continuum

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# Goods vs. services

How national income statistics tabulate what has economic value

**Goods** = independent continuants (cars, houses, bottles of milk ...) which can be alienated (sold, gifted, rented, bequeathed, ...)

**Services** = occurrents (processes), therefore cannot be alienated because they do not survive the provision of the service itself

# International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC)

Agriculture			A	A, B	1
Non Agriculture	Industry	Manufacturing	C	D	3
		Construction	F	F	5
		Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas and water supply	B, D, E	C, E	2, 4
	Services	Market Services (Trade; Transportation; Accommodation and food; and Business and administrative services)	G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N	G, H, I, J, K	6, 7, 8
Non-market services (Public administration; Community, Social and other services and activities)		O, P, Q, R, S, T, U	L, M, N, O, P, Q	9	

## DOLCE treatment

A service is present at a time  $t$  and location  $l$  iff, at time  $t$ , an agent is explicitly committed to guarantee the execution of some type of action at location  $l$ , on the occurrence of a certain triggering event, in the interest of another agent and upon prior agreement, in a certain way.

Doesn't say what a service is, only when a service is present

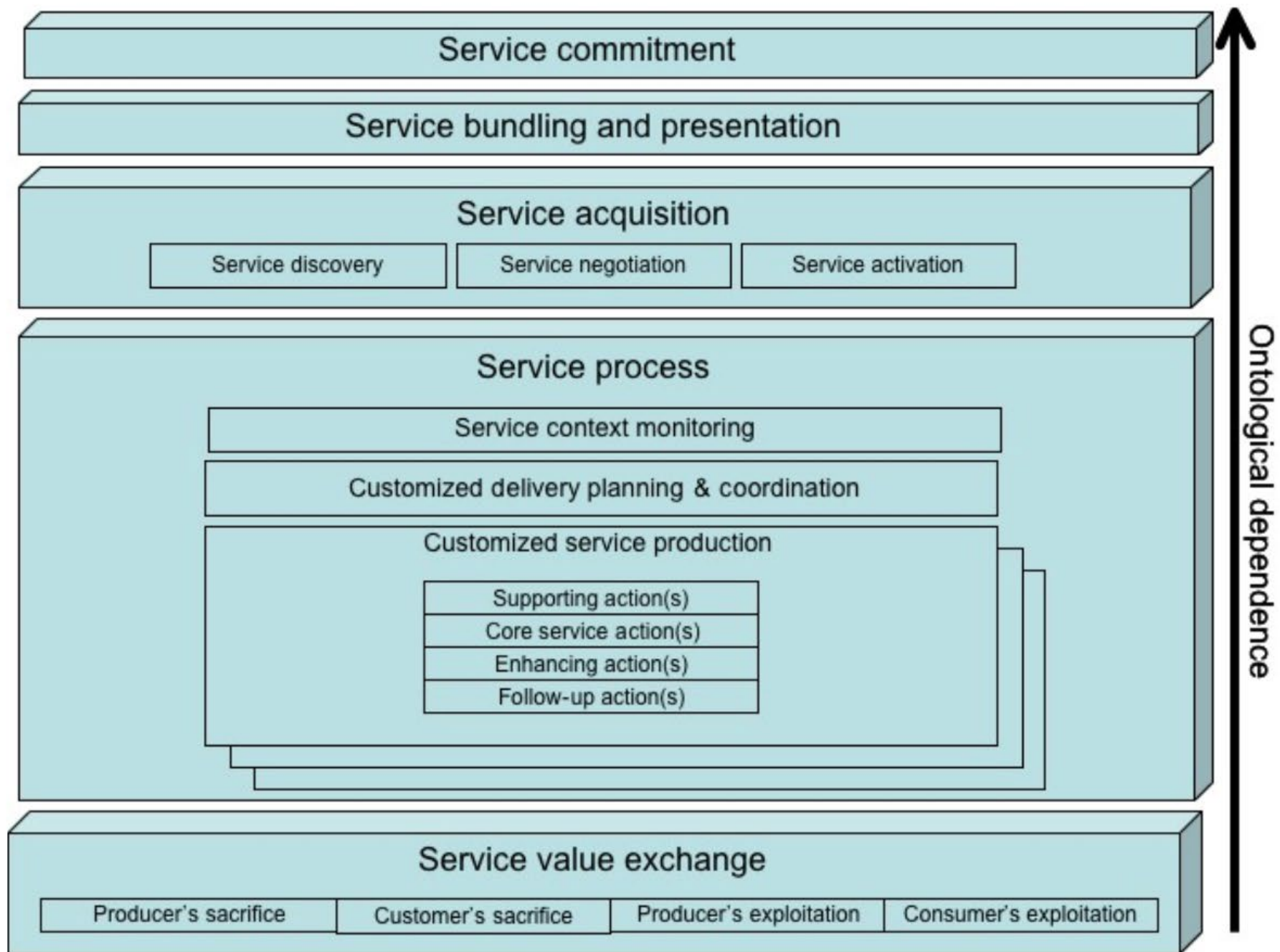
*Towards an Ontological Foundation for Services Science.*  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221142761>

# DOLCE treatment

Identifies five proper parts in a service:

- service commitment
- service presentation
- service acquisition
- service process
- service value exchange

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**Figure 1:** The layered structure of service activities

## DOLCE treatment

Proper part in a service:

- service commitment

“... the commitment act can be seen as a speech act that most of the times is codified in a document, i.e. in an institutional object that can assume many different forms: a contract, an official declaration or deliberation, a service level agreement”

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## DOLCE treatment

at the core of any service there is a commitment situation in which someone ... guarantees the execution of some kind of action ... ) in the interest of somebody who agrees (the service customer), at a certain cost and in a certain way.

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<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/221142761>



# Sherbrooke treatment

## Necessary characteristics of services:

- An intersection between an offer and a request
- A negotiated agreement
- The execution of some processes

An informational perspective on the ontology of services Paul Fabry,  
*et al.* <https://ceur-ws.org/Vol-3249/paper5-OSS.pdf>

## Cases where production and consumption coincide ('pure services')

- nursing service
- guided tour
- taxi service
- bodyguard services

In each of these cases there is nothing left over which could count as a good and which could be consumed, sold, lent ... at a later stage

Goods have economic value only because they are bought and sold

Hence the production life cycle for goods involves accompanying services of buying and selling (pecuniary services)

To buy a car you need to rely on the **services of a car salesperson**, ...



The car salesperson provides a service of helping you reach the point where you can sign a contract to buy a car

General thesis: rich intertwinement between goods economy and services economy (sales, insurance,

The car salesperson helps you reach the point where you can sign a contract to buy a car

It doesn't make sense to say that there has to be an explicit commitment in the form of a contract ... between you and the car salesperson before the salesperson can provide the service of selling you a car.

# A better account

## Part 1: pure services

- A service is an occurrence that is 1. of economic significance and 2. such that production and consumption coincide

sales

nursing

tour guide

taxi service ...

So what about:

interview with a social worker?

interview with a psychiatrist?

Different sorts of lasting outcomes, for example:

- the social worker gives you (approval for) food stamps
- the psychiatrist gives you (a prescription) for drugs

What is provided here is **not a pure service**, it brings some alienable lasting benefit which you can give away, lend, use to buy something



# Production and consumption coincide (?)

What about:

- interview with a social worker which issues in **advice** regarding what to do to address a need?
- Two cases:
  - advice is ignored
  - advice is accepted

# Classical examples of services

- hairdressing
- gardening
- teaching

## Part 2: pattern-creating services

- your hairdresser creates a new pattern on your head
- your gardener creates a new pattern in your garden
- your professor creates a new pattern in your brain

Such patterns are not goods, because they are not alienable: you can sell your garden; but you cannot sell the pattern on your garden created by your landscape designer.

## Service professions

### **pattern creating services**

- life coach,
- trainer in your gym,
- curator of your Instagram page
- cosmetic dentist

But where services *create* patterns

these patterns may then bring further types services in order that the create patterns can be

*protected*

*repaired*

*restored*

## Pattern-related services (professions)

- **pattern creating services** (life coach, trainer in your gym, curator of your Instagram page, ...).
- **pattern protective services** (bodyguard services, police services, military defense services, ...)
- **pattern therapeutic services** (car repair)
- **pattern restoring services** (of art restorer)

But there is not only pattern *creating*

# Pattern-related services (gardening)

- **pattern creating services** (landscape architect)
- **pattern protective services** (weed spraying services)
- **pattern therapeutic services** (tree doctor services)
- **pattern restoring services** (historical garden restoration)

# Pattern-related services (car repair)

- creative car maintenance (new pattern on your carrossery)
- protective (offer winter storage facilities)
- preventive car maintenance (rust protection)
- restorative (restore the original pattern in your antique car)





## Pattern-related services (teeth)

- creative (new pattern in your jaw through veneers, caps, ...)
- protective (prescribe mouthguard to protect against effects of grinding)
- preventive (train in correct brushing and flossing)
- restorative (restore correct pattern in your jaw through fillings, bridges, implants ...)

# Pattern-related services (medical)

- **creative** (cosmetic medicine = add a new pattern to your body)
- **protective** (preventive medicine = build a more resilient pattern in your body through diet and exercise therapy)
- **therapeutic** (cure your infection ...)
- **restorative** (reset broken arm)

## Pattern-related services (orthopedic surgery)

- creative – cosmetic surgery; cure cleft palate
- protective – provide splints to protect limb from further damage
- preventive – calcium regimen
- restorative – reset broken limbs

# Pattern-related social services

- **creative:** social worker provides advice which issues in new dispositions on the side of the client and thereby in a new pattern
- **protective:** social worker reports case to child protective services
- **preventive:** counseling on incipient family-related problems; sex education of youth to prevent early pregnancy
- **restorative:** social work with the goal of restoring the patterns characteristic of healthy development on the part of the child through counseling, mobilization of community resources, monitoring ...

## Pattern-related services (urban planning)

**creative:** planner designs tax regime designed to encourage investment in decaying part of city

**protective/preventive :** planner creates plan designed to protect an existing green area in the heart of the city from development

**restorative:** planner creates incentives to restore the cities decaying properties of high architectural merit

# Negative services

- Object destroying services
  - demolition of ugly buildings
  - removal of illegally erected buildings in a protected area
- Pattern-destroying services
  - graffiti removal (= a form of pattern re-creation/restoration)

# Problem cases

Bodyguard services

Police services

Protection services

Military services

Diplomatic services



# Bodyguard services

- Bodyguard service can best be viewed as involving 3 parts,
  1. standing around (to deter)
  2. retainer (you pay for his readiness to intervene)
  3. intervening (may happen rarely; the more it happens, presumably, the higher the rate will be)

# Public transport services are multidimensional

They are subsidized (or at least organized) by the municipality because

1. they provide relief from a certain amount of car traffic and thereby bring
  - climate benefits
  - speed benefits on the public roads
2. they provide transport opportunities for persons who cannot drive

# Spatial patterns (e.g. created, maintained ... by diplomatic services and by military services)



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# Beyond the Goods-Service Continuum

- Activity yields good (alienable ...)
- Activity is pure service (production and consumption coincide)

# Types of economically salient activity

- **yields good** which survives the activity and is alienable
- **yields pattern** which survives the activity and is not alienable
- **yields nothing** = pure service (production and consumption coincide)

# Types of economically salient activity

- yields good which **survives the activity and is alienable**
- yields pattern which **survives the activity and is not alienable**
  - = *pattern creation*
  - yields further service activities of
    - pattern maintenance*
    - pattern restoration*
    - pattern protection*
- **yields nothing which survives** (production and consumption coincide)

# A new kind of economy

- Not the goods economy
- Not the (traditional) services economy
- But the *pattern* economy



# How do we know whether something is a service or not

1. It is a recognized natural kind (happens over and over again, not a *sui generis* act)
2. It is characteristically paid for (nuns provide unpaid hospital services, and these are still services)
3. It is not a one-off favor (as in the case of a taxi-driver who offers a poor person he passes in the rain a lift to his home late at night)
4. It characteristically involves a contract of some sort (DOLCE) either
  - between service provider and client
  - between service provider and employer