Master Thesis

Rethinking Customer Experience in Multi-Sided Digital Platforms

Customer experience (CX), is recognized as a critical marketing construct that drives firm competitiveness (CX Report, 2021). However, the emergence of alternative business models, such as sharing economy platforms, peer-to-peer platforms, and collaborative consumption (e.g. Airbnb, Uber, Upwork), has disrupted traditional notions of CX and posed new challenges for businesses. In these business models, core services are often outsourced to third-party providers, which introduces complexities in controlling and standardizing service quality. This lack of control can have a significant impact on CX as customers interact with various actors and touchpoints within the platform ecosystem. As a result, in digital platform settings, managers struggle to comprehend the factors driving CX and how to manage it effectively across touchpoints (Larkin, 2019). While various conceptualizations of CX exist in the literature, few studies adequately address how CX differs in such business settings (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020; De Keyser et al., 2020; Kranzbühler et al., 2018; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

This is where this Master thesis comes in. The aim of this thesis is to conduct a qualitative investigation into the factors that shape CX on digital platforms. The study will collect and analyze data related to customers' experiences, perceptions, and expectations to gain a deeper understanding of the key elements that impact CX in the digital platform environment. By examining these factors, the research aims to provide insights into how firms can better understand and manage CX in the context of multi-actor business models.

▪ *N.B. this thesis topic is only offered in English*